

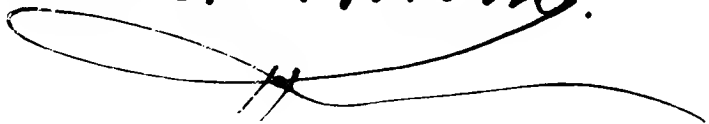
SELECT SERMONS

BY

REV. CHARLES B. W. GORDON.



Yours for heaven,
Chas. B. W. Gordon.



SELECT SERMONS

BY

REV CHARLES B. W. GORDON,

PASTOR FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, HARRISON STREET, PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA.

WITH

AN INTRODUCTORY SKETCH

BY

MRS. REV. CHARLES B. W. GORDON.

“As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.”—MATT. 10.

Volume 1.

THIRD EDITION.

PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA.

C. B. W. GORDON AND COMPANY, PUBLISHERS.

1889

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Dedication

TO THE
BAPTIST BELIEVERS IN CHRIST JESUS,
OF AMERICA,

WHO ARE STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS ON THE EARTH, AS ALL
OUR FATHERS WERE,

I, THIS,

THE FOURTEENTH DAY OF NOVEMBER,
A. D. EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND EIGHTY-SEVEN,

Dedicate this Book,

THE FIRST VOLUME OF MY SERMONS, WITH PRAISE AND
THANKSGIVING, TO

G O D .

C. B. W. G.

P R E F A C E .

I, a humble servant of the Lord,
Having been requested again and again,
By numbers of people young and old,
To publish my sermons for the good of their friends.

Do now consent to their wishes,
And give unto men such as I have,
That all may read both saint and sinner,
And be directed to the heavenly path.

Trusting that those who may chance here to read,
Will not search for the rhetorical phrase,
For such I have not to give,
But rather for truth and give God the praise.

If theologians should herein read,
Who can better than I make plain the way,
I trust they'll not read behind the dark skeptical veil
But take their vision in the clear noonday.

If the humble soul in search of light
Would here be aided on the heavenly march,
And be better enabled to bear his cross,
He must seek the truth with a pure heart.

With earnest prayer to our Heavenly Father
To bless the truth herein contained,
I conclude my preface with this saying,
Lord, let not my labors be in vain.

CHAS. B. W. GORDON.

PARSONAGE, 141 HARRISON ST., PETERSBURG, VA.
Nov. 14, 1887.

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INTRODUCTORY SKETCH.

GORDON'S ANCESTRY.

CHARLES BENJAMIN WILLIAM GORDON, the son of Daniel and Nancy Gordon, was born at Coalrairie, Bertie County, N. C., Nov. 1st, 1861, at an hour when the nation was passing through the greatest trials known in the annals of its history, when the Republic was stirred from circumference to centre, when God was about to loosen the chains of bondage from the fettered limbs of the Negro, and the glorious light of liberty shined but dimly in the distance. He springs from a noble ancestry of which he may well be proud; for not very many of his race, in *this* country, can boast of such noble lineage.

His great grandfather, Charles Brown Holly, was a very conspicuous figure in the Revolutionary struggle, and proved himself to be so courageous, brave and of such sterling worth that at the close of the great struggle he was given his freedom. Charles B. Holley fought as earnestly against the English yoke as if he expected to obtain freedom from oppression. Feeling that freedom was a God-given right to every man, and being fully sensible of the injustice of slavery, he never allowed himself to be driven as if he were a beast of burden, but de-

manded of every man the treatment due him as a man.

His daughter, the grandmother of the Rev. Chas. B. W. Gordon, was a woman of such estimable character and eminent virtue, that, rather than depart from the moral law, she submitted to entire separation from her husband and infant daughter by being sold into another State.

This daughter after growing into womanhood married Daniel Gordon, a man whose lineage is equally worthy

Daniel Gordon was a carpenter by trade and a preacher by profession.

CHANGES.

Before it was fully known that the Negroes would be free Daniel Gordon fled from slavery to the Yankees, took up his abode at Plymouth, N. C., where he was diligently engaged in laying skillful plans to have his wife and children come to him.

When he had succeeded in perfecting his plans he advised Nancy of his whereabouts, and respecting the possibilities of getting to him. Nancy availed herself of the first possible chance of escape, and with her seven children made her departure by night, carrying Charley, who was then the youngest. in her arms.

She was successful in passing the many dangers, which can be easily imagined, that thronged the pathway of those who ventured in those days to escape from the bondage of slavery, and reached the

shores of Plymouth safe, where she met the loving embrace of her husband who for months had been separated from her.

Roanoke Island was soon after made the headquarters for all fugitives from slavery, and thither Daniel carried his wife and children, and there remained until the war closed. After the close of the war Daniel found himself free and independent of fear from slavery's chain, and fully realizing his responsibility as a husband and father, began to look around for the best means of providing for his loved ones.

To return to the place where he was once a slave was more than his manly courage could submit to. He felt that freedom would be better enjoyed by himself and family, and he could better provide for the education of his children, among strangers than among their former masters; therefore, he left Roanoke and moving much farther eastward took up his abode in Perquimans County, which was quite distant from Bertie, his native county. Here he settled down to the stern realities of life, and applied himself to hard and diligent toil for the support of his family. Daniel was a very aged man, and, having passed through many of the hardships of slavery, soon failed physically, and in him was fulfilled the injunction that "Man is once a man and twice a child." Consequently he was able to do little else than lay plans to be carried into effect by his diligent wife and children.

His wife, Nancy, was a seamstress and weaver. She, with the girls, were busily engaged in spinning,

weaving and sewing; while the two boys, Joseph and Charley, with the advice and assistance of their father, were diligent in the pursuit of farming.

Charles, although the younger of the boys, soon showed the greater prudence and foresight, and in a short time we see him taking the entire oversight in making provision for the whole family. Among the girls the most brilliant seems to have been Huldah Ann, who during five years schooling on the island had acquired sufficient education to become a school-teacher. She obtained a position in the public schools and was thus enabled to render considerable assistance in the support of the family. She was the first colored school-teacher in North Carolina, and much credit is due her for being the pioneer for colored teachers in the South: for a colored teacher was then a marvel in the eyes of the people.

About this time Joseph went North, and left the bulk of the financial responsibility of the family upon Charles, who was then about fourteen years of age.

After Joseph's departure Charles was very deeply concerned as to the best course to pursue so as to enable himself to make better provision for the family. After consulting with his brother-in-law he decided to go with him into the business of farming. Having neither land, nor facilities for farming, they rented a farm for which they received one year's rent free to put it in cultivation, and secured a yoke of oxen on condition to use them free for two years, to break them to the yoke.

Their success that year was very encouraging; in the Fall they shipped several bales of cotton, housed many barrels of corn, butchered a large number of hogs, raised a great quantity of peas and other produce useful in domestics, and were thus enabled the coming year to continue farming with greater and improved facilities and renewed energy.

In a few years Charles's brother returned home and Charles discontinued farming with his brother-in-law and took again his brother as a partner. After two years Joseph married, the partnership was discontinued and Charles farmed alone for one year.

EDUCATION.

When Charles was about five years of age he entered school to Mr. Thomas Nixon on Roanoke Island, N. C. Within a few weeks he displayed such brilliant talent and made such rapid strides in his studies, that he became the acknowledged genius of the school. He began speech-making when quite young. The school which he attended usually allowed the scholars Friday afternoons for making speeches; it was on one of these occasions that Charles made his first appearance before the public. While making this speech he grew exceedingly eloquent, created an intense interest and held his audience spellbound. It may justly be said that on this occasion Charles showed forth the hidden treasures of God-given wisdom and the germ of oratorical power with which he is endowed.

After his parents removed from Roanoke Island

to Perquimans County, he richly improved his leisure moments day and night in acquiring useful knowledge, and on rainy days he would go to school to his sister Huldah, who was teaching in the public schools of that county

Grappling with disadvantages and difficulties he would enter the school-room, after the crops were laid by, and remain until the farm work called him again.

Charles had fixed rules by which to study, and when he had committed to memory the lessons to be recited the next day, he would diligently search amidst his small library for the best speeches, from which he would select those he thought the wisest, and commit them to memory, no matter how difficult they proved to be.

Whenever the children were called upon to make speeches, Charles would step forward with something new and vivid.

As he grew older his determination to obtain an education grew stronger, and we find him, after performing a day's hard labor, walking three miles to attend night school. The young men of Charles's neighborhood had a Debating Society of which he was a member; and such was his power of argument, his keen and penetrable understanding and his skill in parliamentary management, that he was always the favored object of the highest gifts within the power of his companions. Charles was now living near Hertford, Perquimans Co., N. C., and was Secretary of the Baptist Sabbath School of that town. In 1877 he was chosen as delegate to represent said

Sunday School in the Eastern Sunday School Convention, which convened at Bethel. Here he bore himself with great dignity and won much distinction. There were prizes offered for the best three speeches delivered during the sitting of the Convention. Charles won the first prize. He painted such fine pictures of the logical situation of his race, using the richest and yet the most simple language, that his audience often burst forth with loud applause, which told plainly that he was playing upon the chord which touched their hearts and excited their admiration as well. Charles had set his aspirations very high, and as he had purchased a comfortable home, and settled his parents in it, he expressed to them his desire to prepare himself for the bar; he had advanced as far as the common schools of his neighborhood could carry him, and he desired to go off to a high school, where he might fit himself for his chosen profession.

His parents acknowledging his dutifulness said: "Charles, you have been dutiful to us, and have had a poor chance for an education. We now give you your freedom and you can make yourself a man." Charles immediately applied for and obtained admission into the Elizabeth City Normal School, passed a rigid examination, entered the middle course, and became at once a member of the school Lyceum. He distinguished himself in argument and recitation, made rapid progress in his studies, and read law at such times as he could spare from his regular course of studies.

Charles was what is termed a hard student, and

whatever he learned he learned it once forever. He remained in school till 1879, when his finances having failed he determined to try school teaching as a means of replenishing his treasury, to send himself to an advanced school of law. He obtained a school at Brick Kiln in Pasquotank Co., N. C., where he taught with much success.

CONVERSION.

In the Autumn of the same year a great, wonderful, and glorious change took place with Charles; he became fully conscious of the awful condemnation which hung upon him on account of his sins; he sought and found the Saviour precious to his soul.

Here his choice of profession was changed; he felt himself called to the gospel ministry.

About the same time he was elected Principal of the public school at Windsor, N. C. After teaching there one year and having made arrangements with Dr. C. H. Corey, President Richmond Theological Seminary, for his theological training, he closed school in the Summer of 1881 to repair to said school.

He entered the Richmond Theological Seminary Oct. 3rd, 1881. During his three years course there he made a very fine mark for excellency of character and rapid progress in his studies. He won much praise from both faculty and students, and gained great admiration and respect from all who met with him. His vacations were mainly spent in laboring in his native State in the interest of his people, and as an Evangelist met with great success.

GORDON RECEIVES A DOUBLE CALL.—AFTER PRAYERFUL MEDITATION HE ACCEPTS THE CALL TO FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, PETERSBURG, VA.

In January, 1884, Rev. Gordon received a call to the Mount Calvary Baptist Church, of Richmond, Va., which reads as follows :

“REV. C. B. W. GORDON,

“Dear Brother:

“This is to inform you that you have been unanimously elected as Pastor of Mount Calvary Baptist Church, Richmond, Va.

“Done by order of the Church, Jan. 2, 1884.

“A. H. JACKSON, *Clerk.*”

In the same month he was called to the charge of the largest membership known to history, between four and five thousand, the First Baptist Church of Petersburg, Va., which reads thus :

“REV. C. B. W. GORDON,

“Dear Brother:

“We take pleasure in informing you that at a regular Church meeting held here on the 21st of January, 1884, the Church unanimously called you to take the pastoral charge. We would be glad to hear from you at once.

“You will find the Church in perfect peace.

“Your brethren in Christ,

“RICHARD COSBY,

HENDERSON BROWN,

ROBERT COOLEY,

J. Y. HARRIS,

ARMSTEAD GREEN,

JOSEPH CROSS,

LEWIS ROBERSON,

SPENCER GREEN,

Chairman.”

“This call is one of the mysteries of God’s ways. This church was much opposed to young men as pastors. Rev. Gordon had never visited it but once—then by special invitation—was only twenty-three years of age and unmarried; yet the whole church seemed united on him. No one vouched for him but God. This is an evidence that God has chosen no more men than he has prepared fields of labor for. The evidence of a man’s being called to the work of the gospel ministry is evinced by his success. If after many years of hard labor the man is unable to accomplish anything, he may rest assured that he has hold of the wrong profession. To be a successful minister, a man must be endowed with *a power of will*. ‘Where there is a will there is a way;’ not a Solomon, not a Plato, not a Harrington has said it, but in the unpublished book of the Universe this wholesome truth is recorded, and the world accepts it as an authentic maxim. Rev. C. B. W. Gordon considered one month and then responded, accepting the call to the First Baptist Church, of Petersburg, Va. Awful and weighty are the incumbrances upon the minister who goes in and out before this people. A church one hundred and fourteen years travel towards Zion, with upwards of four thousand members to be looked after, is no child’s play, and the servant who undertakes such responsibilities must truly possess more zeal and Christian courage than is ordinarily met with among us. To guide this host of Israelites through the dark and thorny desert, to pilot this large ship of Zion through the fiery trials and tem-

pestuous waves of this sin-cursed world, is a great test of religious manhood. Surrounded, as he who preaches to this people is, with every temptation that earth affords, one must be pure gold to stand the test of fire—that overcomes temptations, that controls his passions, and must preach the gospel without mixture or error. He must be able to preach the gospel in its purity and with marked intelligence. Truly, to successfully lead this people, one must be more than the average preacher, and more than the average Christian.

“In the morning congregations of this church, the cream of the literary men and women of the city, and the most expert critics and skeptics, make up the majority of visitors. To properly benefit this class of persons, the preacher must certainly be an intelligent man—acquainted with all the various doctrines and isms of infidelity, and how to handle them with convincing scriptural arguments, capable of counteracting them and captivating the reasoning faculties of such persons, before these baneful isms shall have deranged their souls beyond the hope of recovery. To speak without a figure, the preacher must be able to present the plan of salvation to such men philosophically, logically and irrefutably, or such people are not benefited, and for the lack of which, many poor souls are led captive by Satan to the gulf of misery, from whence no traveler returns.

“If to meet this class of people was the only special requisite, the preacher might have an easier task; but this is not the case. At night there is a large

outpour of such of our race as are compelled to labor or are in service in private families. The majority of these require plain preaching put to them, unlike that of the morning congregation ; hence his congregation is made up of two distinct qualities of people, combining every stage of human society, every profession, vocation, as well as every ism and schism among men. To be pastor of this church, therefore, is to be a man such as we rarely stumble upon.

“ From the day Rev. C. B. W Gordon took charge of this church it has flourished. His first sermon was from Matthew, 28th chapter and 20th verse, using as a text these words : ‘ I am with you always, even to the end of the world ; ’ the subject was ‘ The Redeemer’s Promise.’ He handled his subject ably and eloquently, making three grand points.

“ 1. He noticed the sanctity of the promise, referring to many proof-texts and comparisons.

• “ 2. He showed the authenticity of this promise.

“ 3. The comfort this divine promise affords.

“ In this sermon Rev. C. B. W Gordon did great credit to himself and elicited many complimentary remarks from all the papers published in the city. His preaching was full of wisdom, and abounded with philosophy and practical life.

“ Since he has been pastor of this church he has created and put in motion a healthy stream of morals, that is as clear of spots and as untarnished as the shining rays of sunlight.

“ Although the flower of youth has barely shed its bloom, he nevertheless carries in his every-day walk an undaunted solemnity that tells the world that his

mission is to cry 'Behold the Lamb.' There is a silent preaching in his every-day or daily deportment that constrains men and women to say, 'Surely he is a man of God.' The sinful pride so common among ministers, and most especially those who hold good charges, has no resting-place in his bosom. Yet he has a high appreciative self-respect, and encourages the same in the pulpit. Besides being logical and philosophical, his preaching is direct. He has a certain Christian aim in view, seemingly distinctively fixed in his mind. He then lifts his voice and fires directly at his purpose. Sometimes his aim seems to be to preach a Christian doctrinal sermon, to magnify a Christian virtue, to glorify a Christian character, to interpret an obscure Scripture, to secure the performance of a certain duty—say, for instance, building or repairing the house of worship, or any other Christian duty that demands his immediate efforts. Like a gospel marksman he fires right into the world and brings home game at every discharge. There is no cracking away at random with him; it is straight shooting every pop, and never fails to enter the heart with the piercing arrow of the Holy Ghost. His preaching has not a commanding, but a persuasive air; that is, it does not force but wins, does not drive but leads men to God and to the performance of their Christian duties."

GENERAL REMARKS AND COMMENTS.

To write a graphic description of the Rev. Gordon, the greatness of his soul, the magnitude of his works,

is too great a task for the ability of the writer; and even if possessed of the soul power to justly describe him language is inadequate to express. I shall therefore endeavor only to mention a few facts and leave the reader to enlarge his estimate of him by imagination. From the day on which he appeared before the public at Bethel, N. C., and won the first premium for the best speech delivered upon that occasion, his has been a gradual advancement toward the summit of the mountain of greatness through goodness, that time has not succeeded in retarding.

HE IS A POET.

During Rev. Mr. Gordon's school vacation in 1882, he travelled in the Eastern portion of North Carolina preaching and lecturing with great success. Here he began his poetical career, during which time he wrote and published two poems, one dedicated to the memory of the Rev. L. W. Boone, and another entitled "The Good Shepherd," which were read by thousands and won to him considerable poetic reputation. Below is an extract from the latter:

An Extract from the Volume of Poems entitled "The Good Shepherd."

HELP THE HEATHEN.

There is a land of grief and woe,
 A land far across the ocean wave,
 Where heathen nations know not God,
 Nor seek to find the blessed way.
 This is the way the nations have gone,
 Since in darkness they were born;

The way of God they have not known,
They bow to idols of wood and stone.

They walk in darkness with great delight,
They seek the road to keen despair;
Thousands are travelling without the light,
Thousands have made their journey there.

It was for them that Jesus died,
But His name they have not known;
The Shepherd here has given the 'larm,
But unto them he has not gone.

The voice of God is calling now,
For soldiers strong and bold;
To carry the gospel to them there,
That Jesus' name there may be told.

Oh, that we could hear some one say,
"Lord here am I, send me!
I'll take the gospel and carry it there,
That they may know salvation's free."

If you cannot go, you can give your means,
To help to send the gospel there;
That the heathen may know the name of God,
And for judgment day make some prepare.

If you cannot give the rich man's sum,
You can give a penny or a shilling;
If you cannot pay the preacher's full fare,
You can show to the Lord that you're willing.

GORDON AS AN ORATOR.

Many men labor earnestly for fame in oratory, but never reach the goal for which they seek. A man

to be an orator must be eloquent in speech, deep in thought and logical in reasoning. Oratory does not consist mainly in the mighty flow of words and the alarm of speech; but rather abides in the capability to refute the wrong and affirm the right, so as to convince and win the hearer, and leave him thinking to his benefit.

Such a speaker is Rev. Gordon, and the proof of his oratorical ability is plainly seen in his congregations. His Sunday audiences morning and night number from two to three thousand persons, and these vast audiences are held in the best order and give strictest attention throughout the services. The souls of the Christians are stirred to their utmost depth, oftentimes calling forth loud amens, while the wicked, many of them, are convinced of their error and constrained to seek the narrow way. Rev. Gordon is not only popular with his own congregation but his fame has gone abroad. He has been the recipient of some of the highest honors in the gift of his race. On June 13th, 1886, by special invitation, he delivered the Baccalaureate sermon to the Graduating Class of the Central State Normal School at Fayetteville, N. C. His effort here was worthy of the occasion—while in that city he was the guest of Prof. E. E. Smith, Principal of the above named school, and received the most courteous treatment from the refinement and culture of the city.

Among the most noted of the courtesies received on that occasion was the presentation of a cane, by Mrs. Prof. E. E. Smith, and also an entertainment given in his honor by the ladies of the city.

On the 23rd of Nov., 1886, he was invited to deliver the opening address before the Annual Fair of the "Eastern Stock and Industrial Association" (colored), held at Goldsboro, N. C. On arriving at Goldsboro on the 22nd, he was met at the depot by the secretary, and on the next day was escorted to the Fair grounds, where he met a very large and appreciative audience. Below is found an extract from the speech delivered on that occasion.

SUBJECT:—THE NEGRO AS A CITIZEN.

Friends, Fellow-Citizens, Ladies and Gentlemen:—My presence here to day tells you that I appreciate the great honor which you have bestowed upon me, by your solicitation of me for this momentous occasion.

I appreciate it first, because it comes from a race of people with which God in eternity identified me, the ability and greatness of which I am truly proud.

I appreciate it secondly, because it comes from the State on whose soil my mother gave me birth in 1861, about the time when Almighty God was making ready to shake the fetters of slavery from about four million human souls, by baptizing the South in blood and taking away the very armor in which she trusted, whose citizens I love as brethren.

I appreciate it thirdly, because it calls upon me, God's humble servant, to give tribute to a people who twenty-three years ago shook off slavery chains, walked out of the house of bondage into the glorious field of freedom and liberty and have outstripped the last vestige of their horrible depression and shame, and now stand side by side with all other races of the earth in civilization, playing with credit

their part in the drama of the world—namely, the Negro. The name which hatred improperly translated “nigger” to degrade, has been sought by wisdom of its rightful owner, and dressed in its legitimate garment, and is proven to be the brightest jewel that has ever been found in the field of literature.

The day is a memorable one, because it is the theatre-hall in which is exhibited the exhibition of your prosperity in the many remarkable ways of industry. I have made ethnology a subject of study, and the result of my search, to the present, is that I find that “God has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth,” and that he has equally endowed the Negro with faculties of mind capable of indefinite expansion; and allow me to say here, that I stand not alone in my conclusion, for the leading historians of the world, such as Rawlinson, Rollins, Martin, Herodotus, Hamilton, Smith, Jones, and a number of others testify to the same; and aside from this, the grandeur of your exhibition exhibits to the world that that cannot be denied by any intelligent mind.

When I survey the magnitude of civilization that has been wrought by a people who have enjoyed only twenty-three years of freedom and liberty, I know no subject more suitable to the occasion than: *The Negro as a citizen.*

A citizen is a member of an established government, to which he owes many duties for its lawful protection.

What a government is or will be must ever depend upon what its citizens are. Dutiful, ever faithful, and obedient citizens make a good government, while, on the other hand, indolent, indifferent, and disobedient make a petty government. The government does not make the citizen, but the citizen makes the government; the former must exist before the latter can have its being. The citizen labors to support the government, while the government guards his

rights, and sees that no unjust burdens are put upon him.

The true citizen labors to support and maintain the government to which he belongs, and to do this he must perform every duty assigned; he is responsible for submission, fidelity and obedience; the greatness of all governments is measured by their citizens, whether republic or monarchy.

The government opens to its citizens every advantage of civilization, while the citizens labor to embrace all to the general advancement of the nation at large, and in their great and wonderful inventions are seen the greatness of the government. Now let us see if the Negro possesses any of these qualifications or whether he labors to such ends; if so, then we will have to commend him on his citizenship.

I am willing to risk it; if we fail to find him a submissive servant, a law-abiding citizen, or a benefactor for good, then I will condemn him, and say willingly that he has no rights that the white man is bound by the laws of propriety to respect; while on the other hand, if I should find him faithful and true in all things appertaining to citizenship, I shall claim for him, gentlemen, every right and protection that the American government has in its power to give. Therefore let us notice:

THE NEGRO AS A BENEFACTOR.

In 1862 this entire land and country was overturned in confusion, and the whole nation rocked in a cradle of great fear and lamentation. The South was divided against the North, and the highlands became rivers of blood.

Fred. Douglass had thrown his thunder-bolts of oratory across the broad land of Europe, and wrapped the whole country in a mantle of sympathy for the American slaves. Slavery by the executive head, Abraham Lincoln, was

reckoned the sole cause of the rebellion; yet he dreaded to unlock the store-house of bondage, and bid the Negro to walk forth into freedom, for fear he would not have the moral courage to meet his mad master on the battle-field. *What to do he did not know.* But in the hour of almost total despair, when human effort was about to fail, God in answer to many faithful prayers, seems to have counseled with him, and told him that *Negro emancipation was the country's only redemption*, and gave him courage to move forward; and taking hold of the inspired suggestion, he rose from his couch on the first day of January, 1863, declared the Negro free; and when the news reached the oppressed slaves' ears that they were free, there was much rejoicing in the camps of Israel.

Slavery, with all of its ill effects, had not beaten out of the Negro, as Lincoln thought, the last vestige of courage; it had only made him mad and inspired him for war; therefore with greater courage than Nat Turner could have ever had with his limited host, he shouldered the musket and gathered his bayonet at the command of the chief, and walked on the field of battle, and in two years after, Lee handed his sword to Grant, declaring never again to raise his hand in rebellion. War subsided and peace came, but the country was left in despair.

Four million of slaves were emancipated and turned loose without money or property, and with but few friends. Notwithstanding the Negro had fought so valiantly in war, many doubted his ability to discharge the duties of citizenship, and not a few said he would soon demoralize the government and destroy the country; but instead of demoralizing the government, he honored it, and instead of destroying the country, he built it up. Many thought that as he had been oppressed by the cruelties of slavery, and dependent on his master for all things, that on embracing his

freedom he would never be able to settle down to the stubborn realities of the discharge of the many duties of citizenship, but would stand around like a silly dunce and whine at the government for support, and consequently would forever be a burden to his country; but he has dispersed those black fogs by the sunshine of his greatness, and dispelled the many fears that sickened the hearts of his friends, and disarmed the prejudice of his enemies, by showing that he is fully able to paddle his own canoe, and keep above the necessities of life. As a race, they have made no imposition upon the public funds provided by the States for the poor. Many have supported their poor relations, and in their churches they have made ample provision for their poor saints; therefore we must admit that the Negroes are inclined to help themselves.

Literally they have contributed to the welfare of their country and the support of themselves.

In their churches and benevolent institutions they make contributions annually for the education of their youth. Among them are to be found some of the ablest orators and authors of the country, which are only outgrowths of their educational tributes. Their orators have made indelible marks in the Legislative halls, and elsewhere throughout the country, and their authors have placed in the libraries of this commonwealth volumes of no little value to the nation.

HIS AGRICULTURAL TRIBUTES.

Can any good come out of Nazareth here? Did the Negro regard his freedom as the mere privilege to gamble, steal, and hng the winc cup? No, he regarded it as the privilege to labor and amass wealth for the good of himself, fellowmen, and country.

He soon grasped the idea that, to be an independent man

and intelligent citizen, was to be self-sustaining. That man that is worth nothing contributes nothing to the government to which he belongs. The wealthy support this government and not the poor; nearly every foot of land, all live stock, every library, all house furniture, all railroads and bank stocks are taxed. Do the Negroes own any property in this country? If so they are live factors in the support of the government to which they belong.

As a race, they are more wealthy than any other, considering the time they have had to amass it. Twenty-three years ago they walked from bondage, clothed not in silk nor satin, but wearing the mantle of poverty. The North gave them freedom (?) but did not give them wealth. They settled down in the South among their former masters to eat their bread in the sweat of their own face.

Worked at very low wages: Men (50) fifty cents per day and women (25) twenty-five cents.

Those who wished to be more independent rented lands, much pine thickets and oak forests, cleared them with their axe, and "grubbing" hoe, making bread that way, and gave part of that for rent.

Many bought old teams at high prices, that would die after one year's service. Some rented farms and team and worked on shares; having but little knowledge of mathematics, the white man worked figures while they worked the muscle, and counted one for himself and naught for the Negro. When pay-day came he took the corn and left the Negro the shucks; he the cotton and the Negro the stalk; he the meat and the Negro the bone.

Through all of this the Negroes struggled, and to-day in the South they own over 200,000 acres of land, many fine houses, stock beyond number, and bank deposits unknown. They had in Charleston banks over \$100,000 when the panic came.

Can the Negro swim? one would ask. I think he can; I think he is an expert in swimming if not diving; he has swum thus far, and I think skillful ingenuity by now has built him a bark and he will no longer swim, but will paddle his way over the tossing ocean. I think I would make no mistake to say, that he has constructed to himself a ship rigged well and is now sailing.

The public frauds perpetrated upon the Negro I will not mention, for they are too numerous for my mathematical knowledge. The Negro has not made himself satisfied with his domestic happiness being known alone by his family and a few private friends, but he has struggled to bring it to notice through public exhibition, that his labors and wealth might be commended to respectability, and have the consideration of scholars and statesmen. His wisdom embodies the grand idea that, whether man tills the soil, invents the wonders of Nature, or manipulates the affairs of commerce, he should be intelligent and respectable, that his efforts should be known and felt. Therefore, he comes and lays his works, the efforts of his hand, heart, and head upon the altar of exhibition, for the consideration and approval of the world.

It gives me joy to know, that in this grand and manly effort of Negro courage, out of fifteen Fairs held in the United States, North Carolina can boast of having instituted and maintained ten; for which her colored citizens deserve credit.

I commend you, fellow-citizens, for your great and memorable work, for which rising generations will call you blessed.

As I look upon your Fair-grounds, I am amazed at the vast number of hogs, poultry, cattle, mules, and horses grown by you on your well-cultivated farms; my surprise and admiration are none the less when I look upon the

handiwork of the ladies; a representation of everything that brain, mind and fingers, with needle and thread, can do, is here, all of which voices forth in undisputable tones, our faithful efforts in the past and our intentions in the future to persevere. Truly we are a great people, living in a grand and worthy country, where agricultural pursuits along with scholarship are being clearly demonstrated to the elevation of humanity and welfare and promotion of our commonwealth.

Your exhibition here to-day is creditable and memorable, one that time cannot erase nor nations disgrace. Here is truly Solomon's wisdom for success if not Hannibal's skill for war. It has been said: "*Merge the Negro into other races to make him great,*" but I say for him, as Cromwell said for himself to the artist, when he wanted to paint him so as to disguise the warts on his face: "Paint me as I am." So say I: *Paint the Negro as he is: he needs no race-mixture for his promotion; for God blesses him as he is.*

THE NEGRO'S SUBMISSION AND OBEDIENCE.

That the Negro embraced his freedom with many disabilities, to be faithful in all things pertaining to his own welfare and that of his country, I frankly admit; but there is one thing in which he was not found lacking, namely, obedience, for submission is the only thing that slavery ever taught, or had the capacity to teach any nation or people.

Tell him go and he went; for that was what he had been taught. The yoke of bondage taken from his neck, he stood in the sunshine of his freedom, having struggled through a long night of bondage, ready to obey every call to duty; he knew almost too well how to *be subject to the higher powers*. The many crimes committed by the Negro in the past twenty-three years are not to be accounted for

in his unwillingness to obey, but rather in his ignorance of the laws of his State and country. From bondage he came, having no knowledge of civil law, and but little of divine law; for he was forbidden to study books, even the Bible, and if known to pray he was compensated by the task-master's lash. Under such cruelties, pray tell me whence came his wisdom to know? When you peep in the jails of this country, upon the black face of the Negro, and behold his state, in fetters, pray remember his hardships of slavery. When you pass by the penitentiaries of this land, and meet him wagging with the ball and chain, I beg you remember his adversities in bygone days.

There is not the slightest inclination upon his part to disobey the law. He has but little "say so" in making the laws which govern his country, but he seldom complains. He accepted his freedom under laws made by others, and said nothing as to their imperfections. His obedience was tested in the beginning, and there he proved faithful. On the 7th of last October, the Queen of Cuba, Christina, emancipated her slaves and sent them not to war, but to their homes to enjoy their freedom; on the 1st of January, 1863, Abraham Lincoln emancipated the Negro, and on the same day called him on the battle field to defend his country; he came forth, notwithstanding he had been nearly worked to death in slavery, like an obedient servant, with a sore back and bruised head, and fought manfully for the rights of his country. And if you desire to know how he stood in war, take the testimony of Sherman, Hunter, Phelps and others, who stood with him in war and saw his fidelity to trust, in fighting to defend the constitution he had no voice in forming, and support laws he helped not to enact; they bear testimony of it, that to-day in history lives.

Since the war he has proven himself no less true; notwithstanding he has been denied his rights on every hand,

he has been found present to every call to duty. Some months ago the white military of Richmond asked the Common Council to appropriate \$25,000 for to build them an armory hall; it was granted. Some time after the colored military asked for only four-fifths of the above-named amount, for the purpose of erecting them a hall; they were denied.

On the 31st of September last, when a great part of this continent was shaken by an earthquake shock, Richmond was thrown into great alarm; the penitentiary walls fell and the inmates left to escape. Alarm was given for the soldiers to appear at arms, and the colored soldiers were the first to reach the grounds.

The last to be compensated, but the first to serve on duty.

Now, gentlemen, I ask in the name of this commonwealth, in behalf of the Negro, with such strong and ever-living evidences of his obedience and fidelity to his country, do you not think he has rights that the white man should respect?

The Negro with all of his faithfulness does not ask to be exonerated above all others, but that only he be given a fair representation in all places and at all times.

Having said so very much about the past and present things, the thought is suggested to me that many would ask: "What of the future?" The future is bright and lovely. Judging it by the past, we must presume that rich things are in store.

As for the Negro, he carries his destiny in his own hands; what he is to be or possess, depends irresistibly upon his own effort.

If you would be noble,
 Work and toil to make the way;
 If you would be happy,
 Seek to find the brighter day.

Though your way be dark and dreary,
And your heart be sick with fear.
Never stop in clouds to wonder,
Though you have to shed a tear.

The fact that the Negro is a citizen of the United States, pre-supposes for him every right that the American government has in its power to give. President Cleveland in his inaugural address said: "In the administration of a government pledged to do equal and exact justice to all men, there should be no pretext for anxiety touching the protection of the freedmen in their rights, or their security in the enjoyment of their privileges under the Constitution and its amendments. All discussion as to their fitness accorded to them as American citizens, is idle and unprofitable, except as it suggests the necessity for their improvement. The fact that they are citizens entitles them to all the rights due to that relation, and charges them with all its duties, obligations and responsibilities."

With such guarantees coming from the Executive head, what need we fear? We live in the greatest age of the world's history, when every man may be able and noble if he will.

Let not the Negro hang around and say: "Show me a fair play," but go to work and make his own play. Archimedes said: "Give me a standing place and I'll move the world;" but I say unto you make your own standing place; then you'll move the world.

Now, in conclusion, I would say that every American citizen, whether black, red, brown or white, whether clothed in a mantle of poverty or rich as Vanderbilt, whether the most humble in position or holding the highest office in the gift of the nation, has the same guaranteed rights, and the same interest in the welfare of this government.

Depew said in his commemorative oration, on the Statue of Liberty, October 29, 1886: "We dedicate this statue to the fellowship of nations and the peace of the world. The spirit of liberty embraces all races in common brotherhood. It voices in all languages the same needs and aspirations. The full power of its expansion and progressive influence cannot be reached until war ceases, armies are disbanded and international disputes are settled by lawful tribunals and the principles of justice." •

Therefore, fellow-citizens, seeing that we were one in creation, and are still one in existence, let us bow in humble submission to Almighty God, and say, yea Lord, thou "hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell upon all the face of the earth," and extinguish the burning flames of prejudice that have been scorching our bosoms and damning our souls, and arise, shake hands in union, join hearts in love and fellowship, and work manfully to one common end, namely, the good of our country.

Then will the glad sound be heard
All over the land,
From pole to pole!
The lion and the lamb together lie;
And all are led by a little child's hand.

"Finally, brethren,
whatsoever things are true,
whatsoever things are honest,
whatsoever things are just,
whatsoever things are pure,
whatsoever things are lovely,
whatsoever things are of good report ;
if there be any virtue, if there be any praise,
think on these things."

The reputation won to Rev. Gordon by this effort was of no mean nature. On Jan. 18th, 1887, by special request, he delivered a lecture in the city of New York, at the Mount Olive Baptist Church. Here his effort was so highly appreciated that at a reception given him by the ladies and gentlemen of New York, a Literary Club was formed in honor of him and entitled the "Gordon Club." We would be glad to give extracts from this speech, but space will not admit. On the event of Rev. Gordon's marriage the "Gordon Club" presented him with a handsome gold watch with his name carved thereon, of the value of one hundred dollars.

The Baccalaureate sermon before the Graduating Class of 1887, of the Virginia, Normal and Collegiate Institute, was by special invitation delivered by him on the 29th of May. On this occasion he bore himself with dignity, was greeted by an immense audience and his effort proved worthy of the occasion. The crowd was overwhelming; there was scarcely standing room. It was the largest assemblage that had ever gathered at that place. The sermon delivered on that occasion will be found on page 303.

These are only a few of the many places to which he has been invited. He is frequently on the go, to and fro over the country, to serve his race in preaching and lecturing. Aside from this his oratorical ability cannot be more plainly seen than in his Thursday night audiences at home, in the lecturing hall of his church, where he lectures weekly to fifteen hundred or two thousand persons on important subjects relating to the social, moral and religious welfare of his people.

HIS EXECUTIVE ABILITY.

Rev. Gordon's executive ability is well-marked and accurate. Presiding as he does over thousands, it is necessary that he be wanting in neither knowledge nor manhood. As a moderator he is firm and unshaken, governs with serenity and calmness, and makes every thing move sweet and harmonious.

With him there is no dodging the question: his ruling is like his preaching, scriptural and direct, knowing no man. He only desires to know the facts and the law; then he condemns or clears. Moreover, his executive ability is not only exhibited, seen and felt in the business meetings of his church, but is seen equally as well in every department of his pastoral work which relates to the bettering of the condition of his people. His members and congregation in the dark hour of their life-forebodings seek him for counsel, and often strangers from afar come to him to be advised. He planned the whole remodeling of his church edifice, attended personally to the paying of all bills, superintended the work, and after having completed his plans regarding his church, entirely remodeled the parsonage, making it equal to any in the country for comfort and durability. The Rev. Gordon is wedded to his work for Christ's kingdom and the elevation of his race. He contemplates establishing a Baptist School in this city, and will in a short time begin making preparations to do so. "Work earnest and work ever" is his motto, which sentiment is ably carried out in his every-day life.

MRS. MAGGIE W. GORDON.

SERMON I.

THE COMING SAVIOUR.

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come ; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.—GEN. XLIX : 10.

IN the days of antiquity, as far back as Homer, it was thought that the nearer man approached his dissolution the more his soul grew divine. Modern theology teaches that sanctification ends with man at the grave. Abraham's faithfulness was increased by old age,—Job was more able to detect his frailty in old age than ever before,—both David and Solomon were more able to mark humanity's imperfection when standing near the tomb than ever before; so was it with Jacob, his most loyal acts to truth and justice are seen when contending with the waves of Jordan or while walking through the valley of the shadow of death.

Jacob's trials in life had been many, his cross heavy, but he had ever remembered and respected

* This sermon was preached by your humble servant, before the Shiloh Baptist Association, convened in its 20th Annual Session, in the First Baptist Church of Charlottesville, Virginia, August 5th, 1885.

God. The earthly tabernacle had been shaken by many winds of hardship, gray hairs were the blossoms of his head; the tomb the soon-expected bed of the body, while his soul was about to fly to a rest beyond this vale of tears. So while the old man leaned his disfigured form upon his supporting staff, dreaming of the past and meditating on the future, like a kind, loving and faithful father he calls his children around him — by the hand of God the veil of misapprehension was taken from his eyes, he was led away into the mystery of Israel's future destiny that rested over beyond the hills of thousands of years of time concealed from human gaze — and told them what would befall them in coming years. Therefore, in the language of the text, he points us to the future hope not alone of the Jews but the whole world. Hence let us notice, the text,

I. *Is prophetic of the Messiah:* The fall of man so corrupted the fountain of human life that man greatly needs a Saviour, and the greatest blessing ever bestowed upon mortal was the gift of Jesus, and not only great but mysterious, so much so that it, I fancy, put Satan to a wonder. Satan thought that his success in inducing man to violate the law of God had ascended beyond the possible limits of God's skill, and that having, probably, the third part of heaven at his will,* he was sure for the great in-

* Rev. xii : 7-9.

crease of the human family But when the news left heaven, dashing through the earth down to hell, that the Lion of the Tribe of Judah had prevailed to unseal the book of God's decrees, a kind Saviour had been provided who had conquered death and hell, and the Cherubims and flaming sword at Eden's gate had been taken away, and the tree of life was again man's bread, he was so greatly alarmed and disappointed that the earth, I fancy, was shaken by his groans. God told Satan that the seed of the woman would bruise his head, but in what way this prediction was to be fulfilled he, Satan, seems not to have known. Centuries rolled around and God's prophetic voice was constantly heard concerning Christ through the prophets; and in constant search for his own after the expiration of two thousand years he called Abraham, showed him a land aside from his own country and told him that in him should all the families of the earth be blessed. A little while after that, just before he destroyed Sodom, he told him that in him should all nations of the earth be blessed; and soon after he had offered Isaac, he told him that in his seed all nations were to be blessed; so onward through the line of time this prophetic truth rolled until it reached Jacob on his dying bed, who seized hold of it by inspiration and said: "Shiloh is coming and he is going to take the sceptre from Judah," and when Jesus came he

reviewed the whole line of prophecy when he said: "Prophets and kings have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad."*

Jacob was truly inspired; had it been otherwise with him his words would not have been fulfilled, but being of divine origin their fulfillment was sure, of which we to-day are witnesses by reason of the testimony which we hold.

His words are fulfilled in Christ, who sprang from the tribe of Judah, whose sway Israel and all mankind must acknowledge. He came and declared himself the light of the world; the Jews have seen it and even the Gentiles have rejoiced therein.

II. *Judah was the chosen of God, and, therefore, held the sceptre until the Messiah came.* A sceptre was an instrument used by kings as an ensign of royalty. Jacob meant that God's favor would always rest upon Judah even through his posterity, and that Israel's greatest kings or rulers would come out of his ranks, nations would call him blessed, and that there was none in all the earth great enough to take away his power save Christ who is Lord of lords and King of kings.

It appears to me that Judah was a star of extraordinary brilliancy from the cradle. He saved Joseph's,

* Luke x : 24 ; John viii : 56.

his brother's, life, when the rest of the brethren said kill him; he said sell him to the Ishmaelites, and when Benjamin was sent for by Joseph he was the only one whom the old man, Jacob, felt himself safe to trust. Judah's conduct had been such that his father had unshaken confidence in him, and when he called his sons around his bedside God's choice fell upon him, and Jacob being divinely guided said: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." So it was, the tribe of Judah marched out of Egypt with 7400 men in number more than any other tribe, and in all their travel from Egypt to the promised land it held the lead, and even in the division of the lands its part was the greatest. In the person of David Judah assumed the sceptre, and in the sway of Solomon the Jews saw their brightest days; but after he passed away there seems to have been a gradual decay. They walked astray in sin and finally were led away captive, but Judah stood holding the sceptre; and when they returned from Babylonish captivity all the tribes were consolidated and Judah became the universal name for the Jews.

III. *Shiloh comes, the sceptre departs from Judah, and the people are gathered.* The rudeness and barbarism that was spread over humanity by the fall of our fore-parents, so corrupted human life that

the salvation offered man was four thousand years in preparation. Heathenism with its blackest darkness had changed man, the glory of our God, into shame and disgrace; that which was loyal had become disloyal and corrupt.

The Jews in blindness were seeking vain-glory, and the whole earth groaned in sin and shame, crying for a deliverer. Prophecies had been uttered respecting the Messiah from Eden's fair field down to Malachi, who declared he would arise with healing in his wings; some doubted while others believed, but at last in the fullness of time truth came creeping like a rolling tide, dashing beneath its destroying waves the theories of polytheism and clearing its way from the cradle of Bethlehem to earth's remotest bounds. Christ comes standing on the middle ground between the old and the new, the past and the future, and dashes rays of light that fall like rain and run like streams of fulfilled prophetic sources, which drive back darkness and confusion and bring light and union between the meeting of the two extremes, the old and the new dispensations. Before the dashing rays of his shining light disappeared temple worship, and all of its magnificent rituals passed away. Shiloh is come, and it is told to the world by signs, wonders and angels; and the sceptre must depart from Judah.

Such an event taking place effects a great change.

He has come to claim his own and take his kingdom unto himself. This wakes the devil out of his awful slumber (so to speak), to raise resistance and use his utmost skill to retard the Saviour's progress.

“The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.” Herod lifts his sword to slay, the wise men question to baffle, Satan comes with his temptations to win, and the very demons of hell cry out: “Art Thou come hither to torment us before the time?”* But like a God as he is he treads the winepress alone, and says that, “Every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.”† But let us not dwell here; the Saviour's coming was not the completion of his work nor the joy of his mission; for unto him the people shall be gathered, and it is a foregone conclusion which needs not be questioned that he did gather and is still gathering; and now the question comes, by what means does he gather them? I answer:

1st. *By his Messiahship.* The predictions of the prophets relative to the coming of Christ are so completely fulfilled in his advent that the world can but receive him. The prediction of dying Jacob is surely fulfilled. Paul comes out as an inspired witness and says: “It is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood.”

* Matt. viii : 29.

† Rom. xiv : 11.

The universal expectation of the Jews was that the Saviour would come of the family of David, for God told David: "Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne." This was fulfilled when he was born of virgin Mary, and this great fact the Pharisees appeared to witness when they said, in answer to Christ's question, "Whose son is he?" "The son of David." Thus he was the Messiah for which the world had long looked, therefore a gathering of the people at once began. The wise men left their wealth at the appearance of the star and came forth to pay him homage; the shepherds left their flocks by night and sought him to praise, and when he had entered upon his mission thousands left all and followed him.

2nd. *By his good works.* "He went about doing good." Oh! think of him that day when he walked by the pool of Bethesda and there found a man which had an infirmity thirty-eight years, poverty-stricken and friendless, and said: "Rise, take up thy bed and walk." Jesus is a pool greater than Bethesda; by a simple word falling from his lips like dew from heaven, the sick man was cleansed from disease and made whole and strong.

Again, remember the day of the feast, when men had been sent to take him, he stood up and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me,

and drink," and they returned and said, "Never man spake like this man."

3rd. *By suffering.* It behoved Christ to suffer, otherwise he could have never fulfilled the prophecies concerning him. He said to his disciples: "I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." No human tongue can tell the pains and groans of our dying Lord. He must have suffered; for on that doleful night before his death, when the sins of the whole world were laid upon him, he said: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." When before the world he hung, friendless, despised and forsaken, the cross his throne and a band of thorns his crown, in agony and pain he yielded up the ghost and said: "It is finished."

Now in conclusion I would say that the *divinity*, *goodness*, and *suffering* of our dear Redeemer are drawing and gathering the people to-day, and will draw and gather them till time shall be no more. Shiloh is come into the flesh to destroy the works of the devil, the sceptre has departed from Judah and the lawgiver from between his feet, and there is unto him a wonderful gathering of the people. Many are coming from the north, west, east and south and are

finding seats in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”

SERMON II.*

THE SCIENCE OF SPIRITUAL LIGHT.

I am the light of the World.—JOHN VIII : 12.

LIGHT is represented in the Scriptures as the immediate result of a divine command. In the first verse of the Bible the act of creation is frankly declared. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth," etc. Here we learn that the earth was without form and void; here watery chaos had a duration with an unbroken gloom of darkness.

We have no history of there being further movements made by the Creator until he called forth light. When he said "Let there be light," at once light broke over the face of chaos and the floating vapors were penetrated by its splendor and brightness to their surface. For over 2200 years the science of light has been studied with intense interest by the best minds of the known world; but by diligent search and constant experience they have only been enabled to say that light moves in a straight line, *i.e.*

* This sermon was preached by your humble servant, before the Virginia Baptist State Convention, May 17, 1885, at Norfolk, Virginia, in the Bute Street Baptist Church.

we see an object in the direction in which it really lies.

Aristotle asked the question, "Why can we not see in the dark?" but the interrogator died without an answer.

The creation of light is the grandest feature of the created world, and without it the act of creation would be incomplete. The world was in gross darkness until God said "Let there be light:" then were called forth out of a state of burning mixture, plains, islands and continents; thus light became the first distinguishing act of creation.

The origin of light, as of every other part of the universe, is restricted to the exertion of the divine will and is too deep for our finite perception. The narrative in the Scripture is simple, yet at the same time is so magnetic and impressive, both in thought and in diction, as to fill the heart with lofty and pleasurable sentiment of awe and wonder. If this be the beauty that cloaks around the light of our moral world, what must be the corresponding mantle that robes the Son of righteousness? I answer:

His Divinity. The divinity of the Son of righteousness is one of the greatest mysteries in the world. The mystery may be too great to be comprehended by human intellect and too deep to be fathomed by human skill, but the fact is not to be rejected and put aside on this account, for the world, by wis-

dom, know not God, and to reject his divinity because it is a mystery would be the height of absurdity. Nicodemus, although a doctor of law, could not understand the mystery of the new birth, nor has any of his successors comprehended it, but Christ, by simple comparison, convinced him that it was a fact, which he subsequently admitted. Men of the scientific world are shocked every day with problems that they can never solve, or understand, yet they admit them, and why do you reject the divinity of the Son of God because of mystery? He is divine because he is the begotten Son of God.

He possesses the qualification necessary to make an atonement for the world, and thus becomes the proper substitute for those he came to save. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed."*

"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."† "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."‡ Apart from his divinity he is not the Christ, for he would be only human, consequently could not, in the government of God, atone for another. This makes his divinity strictly necessary to assume the responsibilities of a Saviour, in the restoration of man to the favor of God. Therefore he has the right

* Isa. liii: 5.

† Isa. liii: 6.

‡ Gal. iii: 13.

here to assert of himself that he is the light of the world.

Now let us notice: The sun of our moral world symbolizes the Son of righteousness: 1st. By *brightness* or his power to illuminate. The divine origin of light made the subject one of special interest to the nations of antiquity. The sun was worshipped and intensely honored, for his clearness of brilliancy. When God created the sun, he crowned him with the honor of being the central body of the solar system, around which the planets with their satellites have ever since been moving with an undiminished velocity. The sun is said to be a huge heated mass about 1,300,000 times the size of the earth, with a diameter of about 860,000 miles. At his absence the world is darkened; as he rises (so to speak), sending forth his light that moves through space with the rapidity of over 185,000 miles per second, darkness disappears and the whole earth becomes illuminated by his glory. Just so with Jesus Christ, the Son of the ever-living God; his advent into the world was the bright and shining light to all the nations of the earth. For the angel that took the shepherds by great surprise as they watched their flocks by night, quickened a spirit of joy in their hearts by saying, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you this day is born, in the City of

David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." At this great day of brightness, brought forth in Christ, the spiritual light of the world, the selfish views held by the Jews, that they were the only people of God's choice, was no longer to be tolerated. The poor that had been oppressed for want of acceptable sacrifice, now find a new and living sacrifice, and polytheism falls to the ground. The Jewish high priest is no longer needed to make atonement for the people; Shiloh is come, and the people which sat in darkness see great light, and to them that sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up; and our Lord with boldness makes himself known when he says: "I am the light of the world."

2d. By *greatness*. The sun of our moral world is the centre of attraction; all other lights of the universe are dependent upon him for their support. So is Christ the centre of attraction in the spiritual world. The angels of heaven gather round his throne and say: "Holy is the Lord God, heaven and earth are full of thy glory," and the nations of the earth own him as Lord and say: "Beside thee there is none other." The sun of our moral world has a tendency to beautify, strengthen and revive; he quickens or gives vitality to all nature; when he is veiled by clouds the whole earth is chilled, nature becomes deadened. So with Christ, he is the life-giving agency that quickens and gives vitality to the sons

of earth, and lifts them high in the scale of civilization.

To him we credit all the advancement in civilization that has been made by man from the beginning until now; he is all in all and over all, and when the time comes that we let him go or turn from his teaching, darkness will prevail, and humanity will fall back into ignorance and superstition. This instruction is quite contrary to many of the popular theories of to-day, but nevertheless true. Empty declaimers and grave philosophers inform us that religious convictions are nightmares of the past obstacles, and not incitements to human progress. These wicked voices are proclaiming that the day will soon come, when our churches will be turned into school-houses and the Holy Bible superseded by hand-books of science; then say they, "We may look for better times," but I pity the nation when such darkness shall prevail. The infidel lives in hopes of spreading his theories universally broadcast in the world, with its obnoxious seed. "The Bible is no revelation of divine origin." The deist, with a trembling and wishful heart, looks forward to the day when the word Christianity, or Christian religion, shall be blotted from the pages of history and erased from every mind. The atheist prays that his wished-for time will come when shall be proclaimed on every housetop, on every hillside and in every valley, his

atheistical doctrine: "There is no God." All of these are only powers of darkness howling to overthrow the kingdom of God. "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

Church of God, while these madmen in contempt and derision set aside the grace of God, and reject the teachings of Christ, let us pray "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," for without God we can do nothing. Whence came all modern civilization? It knows no mother save Christianity. The European world is an edifice built by the hand of Christianity. The deluge of barbarism would have swept away the last seed of refinement, and I may say, humanity, but for Christianity, which held up the Light of the world.

I attribute the act of Emancipation to the wielding influence that went from this Light. Twenty-five years ago the thirteen Southern States declared an eternal separation from the Union, because their deeds were evil, and their statute books were deeply stained with the blood of the Negro. This blazing Light began to send his translucent rays through every nook and corner of this dark continent, rising first in the hearts of the Northern churches, then on his way to Congress, where he bearded the lion in his den, mounted higher and higher, waxed warmer

and warmer still, until his accumulating heat swelled into one formidable cloud, the thunders of whose voice shook the civilized world, when he broke the slavery chains that fettered the limbs of over four millions of human souls, and turned this hell of slavery into a shining field of freedom and liberty. As the sun of our moral world quickens and vitalizes nature, so does Christianity give life and vitality to man. What was the South with her slaves? She was but a carcass that stunk in the nostrils of the civilized world; but under the chastising hand of the Lord she is purged, and in the light of Christianity is raised higher in the scales of civilization. Let us pray, dear brethren, that this light will continue to shine, until he disperses the last remains of darkness of whatsoever nature or name, and illuminates the benighted shores of heathendom. Now, dear Christians, we are reflectors of this Light; we are lights receiving our support from Christ the great central light, as the moon is a reflective light of the sun, and we are commanded to let our light so shine that men may see our good works, and be constrained to glorify God.

3d. By *heat*. The sun of our moral world has a burning nature. Were it not for the atmosphere and moisture, our world in the torrid zone would be divested of all living creatures. Every green herb would soon be scorched to lifelessness. So Christ

has appointed a day when he will destroy his enemies by fire. When he shall have gathered his wheat into his garner, he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. David saith that: "A fire goeth before him, and burneth up his enemies round about. His lightnings enlightened the world: the earth saw, and trembled. The hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord."*

Now, in conclusion my dear hearers, I would have you know that this *Light is eternal*. "I am alpha and omega, the first and the last," saith Christ. He is the light of eternity; for he is Lord of lords and King of kings. He lights the pathway of every one that cometh after him not alone in time, but in eternity as well, every one that cometh after him shall never walk in darkness. Unbelieving friends, would you not like to have and walk in this light? Light is the chief desire of honest men; those who love darkness rather than light their deeds are evil. Darkness is an emblem of sorrow, while light is an emblem of pleasure. Christ is the true light, because he is from eternity. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," saith the apostle. He was with the church from Adam to Moses, and from Moses down to his own advent into the world. "He was in the world and the world was made by him, and

* Ps. xcvi : 3, 4.

without him there was nothing made that was made!" He did not come into the world as one who had just been thrown into existence, or as a stranger to inquire his way through life; divinely he was already here. His advent was a special manifestation, as when a hidden fire bursts forth with a shining blaze. He was in the bosom of the Father from all eternity. Palestine was no strange country to him, for it was as a mansion built by his own hand. The hand that was nailed to the cross was the same that reared the mountains, which lift their heads sublime. The hand through which the nails were driven on the cross was the hand that withheld from fallen man the sword of justice, it was no less strong then than when it hung the sun, the moon and the stars, and gave movement to the world. The voice that talked with Pilate at the bar was the same voice that called to Moses out of the burning bush of fire. Moses said: "Thou Lord art seen face to face," and Paul says of the children of Israel that "They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ." Finally, brethren, this light *illuminates the Christian's path in the dying hour*. At the dark brink of Jordan this blessed light shines from above with an everlasting radiance, that guides the pilgrim safely over. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me;

thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” We cannot fear evil, for this Light drives back the dark forebodings by the brightness of his coming, and opens up to the view of the Zion travelers the dazzling throne of our God, so rich, so grand, so felicitous, and soul-ennobling, that they exclaim with one of old, “Oh! death where is thy sting, Oh! grave where is thy victory?” Led on by this Light they go mounting triumphantly up the everlasting streets of Paradise, singing and shouting praises unto the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

‘And when we have been there ten thousand years,
Bright, shining as the sun,
We have no less bright illustrious days,
Than when we first begun.’

SERMON III.

THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST AND THE SUBJUGATION OF HIS ENEMIES.

The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool.—Ps. cx : 1.

It was customary among the nations of antiquity, when victories had been achieved in war, for the victors to place their feet upon the necks of their victims.

Joshua took five kings from the cave of Makkedah, and calling all the men of Israel, commanded them to put their feet upon their necks,* which was a sign of the subjugation of the Amorites, and decided victory over them, in that their enemies were made a footstool.

David uses the words of the text, in describing the Messiah's victorious triumph over sin and Satan. The text is suggestive of great conflict, but no greater than was found to throng the pathway of our Lord, while he contended with life's trials.

It also implies unison between God the Father and the Son.

* Jos. x : 24.

“Sit thou at my right hand.” One of the most perplexing questions to-day, over which human intellect has pondered for centuries, is “How can God be in harmony with the provision for man’s redemption, when man had fallen from his favor by voluntary transgression?” The question is not one of perplexity when rightly considered.

If God were like selfish man, unwilling oftentimes to do right on terms of justice, it would be a little hard for us to account for his union with his son, in seeking man’s restoration; but when we conceive of him as being not only just, but the embodiment of justice, the whole matter is made plain. God’s purpose is to guard his majesty in seeing that the righteousness of his law is vindicated. Adam’s fall made humanity wretched, but when the Son of God agreed to suffer even unto death, it was placed in renewed circumstances.

Man has no communication with the Father save through the Son, who, by reason of mediatorial undertaking, is made “head over all things to the church,* even to the judgmentship of the world.†

Adam’s excommunication from Eden was not a cancellation of God’s love for humanity; hence he stood ready and willing to restore him, provided the law could be fulfilled. “God so loved the world

* Eph. 1: 22.

† John v: 21-29.

that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." * So he stood with the Son in combatting against the prince of darkness. Therefore says he to him:

“Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool.”

The work of redemption was indeed a severe contest. Civil war is quite a severe contest, but spiritual is more so. In times of civil war men esteem not their own life as being dear, the whole country is turned upside down; even women and children are fearfully distressed, running to and fro in great alarm, no rest to be had day or night; the whole nation is rocked in the cradle of fear.

On the battle-field soldiers, like madmen, are lifting the hearts of their fellow-men on the end of their swords, while the fires are flashing, and the cannon balls, like the muttering thunders, are heard passing and repassing, before whose awful power men as victims fall in their own blood for their country's honor. All around are seen the bodies of the dead, and heard the groans of the wounded and dying; the very air is made to tune with the screams of mothers weeping for their sons, and wives groaning for their husbands; which calamities are followed by dissolutions and famines, that throw the

* Jno. iii: 16.

whole country in despair and want, from which it does not recover for years.

It will be many years yet before this country will have fully recovered the damages of the last war. But all wars bring to the country some great good.

The nations' *evil* is the cause of their sufferings, the result of which is generally a consciousness of their mistakes. However severe the contest of civil war may be, it cannot approximate the struggle of spiritual war. No victory equals that over sin and death. No general, however skilled in war, however successful in battle, has ever won a praise equal to that merited by the Son of God. He is unlike man, in that he gained his victory in death, while man loses in death.

His victory is more great, because he won it in Satan's kingdom. History credits General Grant's success in the great civil conflict strictly to his great skill in war, for everything was against him. His men fought in a strange climate, hundreds of his soldiers died from disease, because they were Northern men, and could not acclimate themselves to the South; for which Lincoln saw it necessary to emancipate the Negroes, to make them soldiers in defense of the North. Christ fought in a strange climate, so to speak, yet he was acquainted with man, by reason of creation. Satan had surveyed and mas-

tered the entire field of humanity. He was properly called the Prince of this world; and the only way by which he was to be subdued, was by Christ revolutionizing humanity, and introducing the *new birth*. Therefore said He to Nicodemus, “*Ye must be born again.*” Our Lord declared this to be true when he said: “How can one enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man?” That is what he rightly did to Satan; he entered his dwelling-place by becoming incarnate, in coming under the law, and bound him and cast him out and took his seat on the holy hill of Zion, and is now a living King forever, to whom every knee must bow, and whose sway every tongue must confess.

Christ and the Father are one, and *those that war against the Son fight against God, and he will make them his footstool.*

The Jews and many others admit the being of God, but reject the divinity of Jesus Christ, which makes their guilt equal with those who deny God’s existence. While they are the same in essence, they are distinct in office. Christ’s work, properly speaking, was reconciling God and man; his victory consists in that he robbed death of its sting, and restored man to God’s favor. He tasted death for all men, in that he gave his life a ransom for many. He paid a debt for man that he could not pay for him-

self, in that he satisfied the claims of the law; and Justice was satisfied and met Mercy in friendship, and told him to sit at his right hand, until he made his enemies his footstool. Satan did not die when Jesus died; he only received an immortal wound, by reason of death having lost its sting. "The law gives sin its damning power," but Christ by his death took away the effects of law and substituted grace; by this Satan can no longer hold man by reason of force, but can only claim him when he fails to accept Christ as the living Saviour.

Christ, in paying the debt that man owed Justice, won the favor of God, and gained the enmity of Satan. Now all that is asked at the hands of mankind is an acceptance of Christ as the promised Saviour on his part, and the enemies of the soul will be overcome. He sits at the right hand of the Father pleading man's pardon, while the Father gives merit and justice to his plea.

Satan in combat with Christ comes in contact with God. Grant conquered the armies of the South, while it was in President Lincoln's power to say how low they should be placed, and how much they should suffer.

God is the executive officer of the universe, and when he lifts his eyes in vengeance upon the enemies of Christ, he places them so low that they are made the footstool of a conquering Saviour. Mark the

words: "I will make them thy footstool." It is God's to punish, while it is Christ's to overcome.

His subjugation.—Jeff Davis and all the South were conquered when Lee handed Grant his sword, but when Grant died Jeff Davis and the South revived. On the 9th inst. Ross subdued Walsh in a sword conflict, but on the 15th the action was repeated, Walsh was the victor. But we find none such in the spiritual world.

The revolution effected in the victory of Jesus Christ over sin, death, hell and the grave can never be restored.

His enemies are made his footstool, never to be exalted again.

He met his disciples in Galilee after his resurrection, declaring that all power was his; and Jesus met John on the island Patmos, and affirmed his assertion, by saying he liveth forever.

SERMON IV.

GREATNESS MERITED BY SERVICES.

Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister.—MATT. XX: 26.

THE mother of Zebedee's children asked of our Lord a great thing, when she asked him to allow one of her sons to sit on his right hand, and the other on the left in his kingdom; in fact she asked for an impossibility.

She allowed her aspirations to run off with her good sense. This is the only time to my remembrance that Jesus ever said that he had not the power to give, and the reason for this utterance is, that the request runs in conflict with man's free agency, and the great lesson which our Lord teaches here is:

I *That parents have not the power to give their children seats in heaven, or to set them up in greatness.*

This woman judged Christ's kingdom from a temporal standpoint; she no doubt knew of some mother who had gone to Cæsar or some king, and by her

humble request had been able to give her children lofty seats in his kingdom; so I guess she thought that she would be in time to make her children first in Christ's kingdom, but his kingdom is quite different from her thought.

It is spiritual, and he who would enter his kingdom must be born again, and being born is an individual matter; every man must believe for himself, and be saved for himself. If he fails to do this, he can have no seat in heaven.

Aside from this, the reward is his Father's to give, and he gives to none but those who believe on his Son and accept his teachings.

II. *That great men are to be servants.*—Christ was great when he rested in his Father's bosom, before the foundation of the world was laid, but he was greater when He unrobed himself, laid aside his crown and bowed the heavens, came down, suffered, bled, and died for sinful man.

Great men are the men to be servants, for a lost man feels highly honored when a great man stops to seek him, and he throws a greater value upon that man's services. This is what Jesus meant to teach the woman. If her sons were great, their greatness was a reason why they should be servants and not lords; for he came not to be ministered unto by men, but to minister to them.

III. *That the last shall be first.*—While the woman

did not exercise common sense in her request, Christ answered her very wisely, and in a way which undoubtedly rendered her general satisfaction, if she understood him, and I guess she did, for she makes no complaint afterwards. He says that the seats for which she asked were his Father's, and he would give them to those for whom they were prepared, which does not absolutely imply that her sons would not get them, but does imply that they are prepared for the faithful servants, and that if she would have her sons to occupy those seats, she had better teach them humility and not exaltation.

Dear hearers, I hope you will read this chapter when you go to your homes, from the first to the twenty-eighth verse.

The verse from which I have taken my text throws a flood of light on the parable given in the first part, about the hired laborers and the vineyard; there he says in conclusion, that the first shall be last and the last first. He brings out the thought more plainly when he teaches us to be servants here, that we may be kings and priests hereafter—be slaves here that we may be free hereafter, which is far better.

It was better for Elijah to have suffered here as God's prophet, and have been carried to heaven in a chariot to rest away from all his fears, than to have been king over Israel, to die as Ahab did. It

was far better for Lazarus to have died a beggar to be found in Abraham's bosom, than to have had all the world here, and died and gone to hell as Dives did.

So our dear Redeemer says to us, "If you suffer with me, ye shall also reign with me."

SERMON V.

ENERGY AND PERSEVERANCE.

From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.—
MATT. XI : 12.

EVER since man fell there has been a warfare between God and Satan, one standing by the truth while the other is trying to break it down; one trying to restore man to the favor of Justice, while the other is trying to hold him in despair.

The contest was so very great in the days of Christ Jesus, that even John the Baptist seems to have doubted him being the promised Saviour, and sends to him out of prison, to know if he was he that should come or should the people look for another. He referred the messengers to his works as an evidence of his divinity, and then returns to the great multitude that stood around him, and said that the kingdom of heaven, which he had come to establish, had suffered violence from the days of John.

Our Lord asserts a fact here, which time has fully proven, however strange it may seem; for in all ages the wicked have resisted his kingdom with

violence. They rush against it in battle array, like fearless warriors fighting against a city to take it. But the text teaches another lesson; it does not only teach that the kingdom of heaven is resisted with violence, but it also teaches that it is attended with violence; in this sense let us notice:

I. *The kingdom suffered violence in the beginning.*
—John came forth as a forerunner of Christ, to prepare the hearts of the people for the reception of him, and he was assailed by the greatest opposition, and yet he forced his claims on the thoughtful mind, and won the resolute soul. He was imprisoned and beheaded.

Christ came, the King of the kingdom, facing the public, and drawing much attention. He had the meekness of a lamb, and also the boldness of a lion. Herod sought to slay him in the cradle, and Joseph with his mother fled with him into Egypt, but when twelve years old, he walked back and took his seat in the midst of lawyers and doctors. He argued and disputed with them; his zeal is seen in his every action of life.

In Bethany his life was sought and he fled thence, but in a few days he was sent for by Mary and Martha to rescue their brother from death, and yet with boldness he returns and performs a miracle, which has truly excited the world.

He was despised and rejected of men, and at last

put to death, but on the third morning, he rose with all power in his hands, with victory over death, hell and the grave. The disciples of our Lord were commanded to be as harmless as the dove, but as bold as lions as well.

He told them if they had not a sword, sell their cloak and buy one. "In the world ye shall have tribulation," says he, "but be of good cheer." They were to fight not only against flesh and blood, but against principalities, powers, darkness and spiritual wickedness in high places as well. They were not only to preach the truth, but drive it and persuade men to accept it. Before them stood an army robed in darkness, in whose ranks stood their king, whose name is Satan, the father of lies, firing up their zeal to battle array, seeking to overcome, and in order to take away his armor it was strictly necessary that they should have equal zeal or more.

Some men claim friendship with right, because they believe right to be the easy way; but my dear brethren, right must be supported by zeal and that boldly.

The American citizens would never have secured a victory over England, however right their side was, or might have been, had they not fought with all their might; neither would the North have subdued the South in the great civil struggle, had she not given her ships and efforts to war, and her men to death.

Neither can the Christians take the world for Christ Jesus, unless they fight with all their might. This the Apostles found necessary, so they entered upon their duty, shielded with the whole armor of faith, laying down their life for the sake of Christ. With zeal through bloody floods the kingdom has been handed down to us, and let us with zeal carry it on until the last foe is vanquished.

II. *Energy is necessary to succeed in any direction.*—The man that enters into business, lying around waiting for something to turn up, or merely trusting in luck, is sure to be a failure; while he who enters upon his work with hand and heart, with a will, to do or die trying, will be sure to succeed.

It is possible for a man to be right and then not succeed. Right, to succeed, must be energized by human effort. Noah's righteousness did not save him from the flood without effort, but God commanded him to build the Ark and he did so, and was therefore saved.

Neither did Lot's righteousness save him from the flames of Sodom without effort. He was commanded by the angels to flee to the mountain; this he did and was thus saved.

So with the kingdom of Christ; it is established upon true basis, but to make it universal in its dominion, it is necessary to push it upon the world

by force, because it is rebuffed on every hand by the powers of darkness from this evil world.

When Christ came he found the devil's kingdom erected. The devil was king on earth, and Christ's coming was to take away the armor in which he trusted, overturn his kingdom, and cast him out to dwell in utter darkness.

To do this it required no little power; God alone could do it. Christ did not sit down and wait for men to come and enter into his kingdom without any effort on his part, but it is said of him that, "He went about doing good."

"A pilgrim through this lonely world,
The blessed Saviour passed;
A mourner all his life was he,
A dying lamb at last."

Now his disciples are sent forth to bear the cross of shame and conflict, to set up his kingdom in all the world. "Go ye therefore and teach all nations," is the great command, not to the rich and great alone, but to all classes of people, not to the Jews alone, but to the Gentiles as well; and in order to bring success to their effort, it must be done with untiring energy. Approach men with boldness; for it is dangerous for them to stay away, and glorious for them to come.

III. *The violent take it by force.*—Here we strike a declaration that throws great light upon what has

gone before. It does not only require energy to carry forth this kingdom, but it also requires energy to possess it.

Show me a man who is a follower of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by reason of the glory of the kingdom of heaven, and I will show you one who entered in by force.

The soul that starts out for heaven denies himself, takes up the cross with a willingness to fight until death. Moses was commanded, while he stood near the burning bush, "to take off his shoes from his feet, for the ground on which he stood was holy ground." So with the soldier of the cross, he must lay aside every weight to win the race, he must divest himself of all self-righteousness, with a willingness to lay down his life for Jesus. He lays hold on the promise of God, like Jacob did the angel, to never let go until the soul is blessed.

Shame leaves the heart and fear disappears, and like a bold soldier he stands up and says:

"In all my Lord's appointed ways
My journey I'll pursue;
Hinder me not, ye much-loved saints,
For I must go with you.

"Through floods and flames, if Jesus leads,
I'll follow where he goes;
Hinder me not shall be my cry,
Though earth and hell oppose."

Is not this the violent taking it? Surely it is, and none but the violent can reach it. It calls forth the bottom effort of the most valiant to take it, and he who is not valiant cannot succeed in getting it nor giving it to others. He who will succeed in being a good Christian must be faithful, and be in the work of truth with all of his mind, soul and strength.

Men and brethren, have you got hold on the kingdom? If you have, you are in it, and if in it you are heir to all the commonwealth of Israel. Never let your hold go until you reach the golden shore, where we shall know and be blessed forevermore.

SERMON VI.

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER.

And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.—LUKE XXII : 15.

OUR Lord was a prophet as well as a priest and a king ; therefore he knew the very hour his sufferings were coming upon him, preparatory to which, he called his disciples and instituted the momentous supper, a lasting memorial to be celebrated through all ages as a token of his suffering and death. What greater evidence of friendship and love could be shown than to leave with his friends or followers an institution of his own invention to be enjoyed by them alone ? The thing itself is enough to make all men love him if only rightly considered. “ With desire I have desired,” says he, “ to eat this passover with you.”

The original seems to express it more strongly ; it gives it as a premeditated desire coming forth from the heart, *I have heartily desired*. Not from any mere rise of passion was he moved to eat with his disciples, but was actuated from deep issues of the heart.

In this he was more wise, thoughtful and loving than any human has ever been. I have never read of any nobleman or king calling his subjects around him to sup with him just before his death, to comfort and cheer them, but Christ.

He is the only one who is able to foretell his suffering and death, and the only one who is able to quiet his nerves and meet his fate in perfect peace, and the only one in whose bosom the ocean tide of love flows so strong as to make him perfectly willing to die for his enemies.

The thing that would arrest our attention most is the thing that prompted Christ to institute this supper with his disciples.

I. *He desired to teach them humility.*—The first lesson a student of the divinity learns is humility; it is a principle that characterizes the government of heaven. Thus says Christ: “Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” * “Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.” “Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” “Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.” At the supper, there was a strife among the disciples as to who should be the greatest, and our Lord said:

* Mat. xix: 14.

“The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.”*

And by way of giving them an example, he *serves* them on this occasion, even to the washing of their feet.

II. *He desired to strengthen them in the Spirit.*—The great prayer that he offered on theirs and our behalf, on this momentous occasion, will not be forgotten in eternity: “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.”

He had told them about their sufferings, for, said he, it is written, “I will smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered.” “All of you shall be offended this night because of me.” Therefore prayed he his Father to sanctify them through his truth, and not them alone, but all who might believe on him through their teachings. At the passover the lamb that was slain typified his own travail to death for sinners, and desiring to be strengthened, he prayed his Father to glorify him with the glory he had with him before the world was; and as he viewed the travail of his own soul unto death, he surveyed the entire floods of future troubles, through

* Luke xii: 25, 26.

which his disciples were called to pass, in establishing upon the earth the kingdom he had inaugurated for man's redemption; therefore said he: "In the world ye shall have tribulation," and as they travailed "through floods and flames" the slightest remembrance of this *night's communion* cheered their hearts.

III. *He desired to stamp upon their hearts a lasting remembrance of himself*, his sufferings, going away and his coming again; thus said he: "This do in remembrance of me."

Memorial is a custom of ages; Jacob and Laban made one of a pile of stones; so did Joshua when he and the children of Israel passed over Jordan; and so on, as civilization advanced, structures have been built in memory of departed dead, out of the most precious stone, as an expression of esteem.

Christ builds his own *memorial* not of stone, gold nor silver, but of his own flesh and blood, imperishable, as lasting as time itself, to be *served* all over the world: "This is my body which is given for you," and "this cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you." Such a sign, so full of life and power, the world could have never erected to his memory; therefore he sets it up before he leaves. "This do in remembrance of me," "for as often as ye do eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death until he come."

SERMON VII.

JESUS TALKING BY THE WAY.

And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures ?—LUKE XXIV : 32.

ONE Sabbath morning about the break of day, there was a stone lifted by the hand of an angel from the gloomy sepulchre of our dear Redeemer, at the moving of which the earth shook, and in the midst of the great alarm he stepped out of the grave, leaving behind him his grave clothes, and walked out a little way west of Jerusalem, where he came in contact with two persons who were walking the sandy road making their way to Emmaus, deeply engaged in a conversation, over which they pondered without understanding. Jesus walks up, the master Teacher of divine truths, and makes an inquiry respecting the mystery that had not only proved a phenomenon to them, but had thrown a melancholy vail over them, which had chilled their mortal frames, and made their hearts sick with fear. “ What manner of communications are these that ye

have one to another?" asked he. So simple were his words, that they regarded him as a mere stranger who knew nothing about Moses the prophet, nor Jesus Christ, and consequently knew nothing about the great question which seems to have been the topic of their conversation, which was engaging public attention everywhere; about which they were talking.

"Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?" said Cleopas, who undoubtedly spoke the sentiments of the other. About this time Jesus seems to have caught, so to speak, the idea that they were talking about matters pertaining to the kingdom of heaven, therefore he draws a little nearer and asked: "What things?"

There was something attractive about our Lord, which held their attention, though he appeared to have no knowledge of the subject.

So they said: "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him." Proceeding farther they said, that this man Jesus was to have risen to-day; for he promised to rise on the third day, and that some of their women had reported his resurrection as having already taken place.

These were the things, and how these things could be they could not tell; for they expected Jesus to restore to the Jews their earthly kingdom, and make them the paramount people of the earth, and how it was that his enemies had conquered him they could not well see. Their disbelief seemed to have given the Saviour inward pain. Their inability to understand the mystery rested upon their ignorance and unwillingness to believe what the prophets had said.

They seemed not to have been willing to admit the reasonableness, or the possibility, of these things being true, for we read in the eleventh verse just what they thought of what the women told them: "And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not." This is what, I fancy, made our Lord so very slow in approaching them. They had no faith and he asked them questions in search for it. Our Lord cannot feel at home when there is no faith.

"Have faith in God," is ever his teaching. Had they had faith, they would not have been so very long finding out God, after whom they were feeling. The absence of faith was the gloom of fear, and the scales that darkened their sight.

But our Lord does not leave them alone just here, for he sees in their hearts a willingness to believe, if they only understood. "Faith comes by hearing,"

therefore they need to hear. So he entered upon the law and walked back to Moses, and took them by the hand and led them along by the way of the prophetic road, onward to his coming and down through the valley of his sufferings, to the cross and to the tomb; and showed them the utility in all these things, and how it was necessary for these things so to be, and the glowing eloquence of his words fell upon their souls like a live coal of fire from a burning altar, and they began to draw near with increased faith, and their doubts and fears began to sink, as is always the case when a soul begins to recognize Jesus, and diving into the floods of his teaching, and drinking from the fountain of life, they felt willing to believe all and doubt nothing. And our Lord broke bread for them and their eyes were opened.

He had led them to the rock of belief, and they had stepped up and securely planted their feet thereon. Right here is where our Lord breaks the bread of life; when we have been led out from among the wiles of disbelief, and the soul is anchored by faith in him. When this takes place there is a wonderful change brought to bear. *Just notice, will you:* When these men first came in company with Jesus, they showed but little willingness for him to remain with them, but now such a great change has taken place in their hearts and in their mortal frames, that

they raised their bottom effort to induce him to remain with them when he would have departed; “but they constrained him, saying, Abide with us.”

Oh, dear brethren, it is a grand thing to become acquainted with Jesus. I never in all my life knew a man to become acquainted with him who ever desired to leave him. Our best friends sometimes become a torment to us and we desire to leave them awhile to become reconciled, but we never desire to leave Jesus.

His disciples had been with him three years, and when he suggested to them his departure, he filled their hearts with sadness, and he was unable to console them without the promise that he would not leave them alone, but would send the Holy Ghost, who would lead them into all truth, and that he himself would come again and receive them to be with him for ever.

Those people who are always ready to leave Jesus and influence others to leave him, have never as yet been acquainted with him. The soul that becomes acquainted with Jesus is unwilling to depart from him, however high the storm rages or the wind blows.

“Through floods and flames if Jesus leads
I’ll follow where he goes;
Hinder me not, shall be my cry,
Though earth and hell oppose.”

Like Jacob of old: "I will not let thee go," says the soldier of the cross; for in thee is life and salvation, and out of thee, is consuming fire.

"If not unto thee where shall we go," says Peter; "for thou hast the words of eternal life." So it was with those weary travellers, who had walked in company with Jesus from Jerusalem to Emmaus; they felt unwilling to let him go.

The longer they gazed upon him and talked with him, the more attractive he appeared unto them, and the more they saw beautiful about him; and alas! alas! their faith grew so very strong that Jesus broke bread to them; and as they began to eat their eyes became opened, and they saw that he was the very same Jesus that had been crucified.

Dear brethren: The more faith we have the better we can see and *understand Jesus*. "Their eyes were holden that they should not know him." Jesus disguises himself, so to speak, under faith, and no eyes can see him save the eye of faith. It is possible for man to be very near Jesus and not know him, because he has no faith in him. These men stood, walked and talked with him, and then did not know that it was he until their love for him grew so strong that they had faith in him and ate of the bread he blessed. Just so soon as they climbed up the ladder of faith high enough to look Jesus in the face, their eyes were let loose from

under the cloud of disbelief and they saw him as he was, and their hearts rejoiced. Just hear them talking about him after he was gone, for he always leaves us talking about him, saying, one to the other, "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way?" Here we come to a new text, and we come to a new atmosphere of thought.

Communion with Jesus always gladdens the heart, for he is meat to the hungry soul: "Did not our heart burn within us?" This expresses the idea more fully; it shows the intensity of his love power; it sets Jesus up above a mere man. His is a power that takes hold on the soul, which is a moving beyond human passion. He reaches the soul of man in truth and lifts it up out of darkness and sin, and washes it in his blood and makes it whiter than snow

It is indeed a treat, yea, a divine treat, to be with Jesus. Those men were glad that they had been so highly honored to have been blest with the privilege of being with Jesus, the Lamb of God, the friend of sinners; so happy were they that they hurried back to Jerusalem as bright witnesses of his resurrection, telling it that Jesus had risen indeed.

Oh! what a change; that which they once ignored as an idle tale they now esteem as the most endeared truth of earth. Just see how a knowledge of God

can change man. The vile sinner who once cursed God is made to praise him when he learns of him.

The infidel doubts the existence of God until he embraces his acquaintance, and then like these happy souls he goes forth praising him.

“Go home and tell thy friends what the Lord has done for thee.” I think but a very little of that man’s religion who cannot tell it. It is a secret that cannot be kept. It is like fire in the midst of dry straw; he wants to tell it, must tell it, and he will tell it to all the world around.

But let us notice farther: The road on which they traveled to Jesus was “*Faith*,” but the hand that led and guided them on that road was *his talk with them by the way*. What thou readeth, understand! How can I understand without a teacher; God’s truth to have its sway on human souls must be taught not only in the class-room or behind the pulpit, but by the way.

The word of God is a mystery, deep as the ocean and broad as the world. It will not do, brethren, to give men the Bible and say, “Here is the truth,” but we must stop and dwell by the way, and enter into the fountain and deal it out to them. Explanation is needed and wanted on the highway, in the hedges, on the streets, in families, around the fireside, and every and anywhere.

“Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel

to every creature," is the divine command. The disciples showed that they caught sight of what their Lord meant by their manner of teaching.

They did not only stand in the temple and explain the truth there, but on their way to the temple they stopped at the gate and said to a beggar, "Such as I have I give unto thee."

How did the members of the church at Jerusalem discharge their duty? Did they walk the paved streets of Jerusalem with their mouths closed? No. They went from house to house, breaking bread. God help us to be teachers of truth by the way.

SERMON VIII.

THE TRUE TEACHER.

We know that thou art a teacher come from God : for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.—JNO. III : 2.

THIS is a complimentary expression by Nicodemus, witnessing the divinity of Jesus Christ, as having been thoroughly proven and affirmed by his wonderful works.

The utterance is to be noticed as a worthy one; first, because it is about a worthy character, and secondly, because it is spoken by a worthy man.

Sometimes when we speak well of persons, we are afterwards made sorry because of the person's conduct, but Jesus Christ is fully worthy of all good that may be said of him. The value of compliments is to be weighed always by the ability and reputation of the person from whom they come. Many a man has been rejected with his recommendation in his hand, because it was from a man of no reputation nor ability.

Nicodemus was a man of great ability and no small reputation among the Jews. He is mentioned

here as being a ruler of the Jews, a member of Sanhedrim; therefore his words come down to us with considerable weight and meaning.

Thou art a teacher.—A teacher is one who imparts instruction to another; he is one upon whom is involved a great responsibility; the name he bears presupposes qualification, and he is expected to be ready for every emergency that may meet him in his profession. Then to be a teacher is to be a man of extraordinary ability, for he is not alone to impart instruction, but he is expected to make his teaching so very plain that the most dull in apprehension may readily grasp his knowledge.

All who are called teachers are not teachers; but Nicodemus says to Christ: “*We know that thou art a teacher;*” not affirmed by one alone but by many.

This shows that our Lord had won of the people to himself confidence, not among the common people alone, but among the most learned as well. Nicodemus does not express himself alone, but he expresses the sentiment of the whole council which had, no doubt, sent him; therefore he appears here as a representative of that grand body which was the Jews’ *parliament*.

Dear brethren, Jesus had done what was necessary for every teacher to do who would succeed. Confidence must be gained before attention can be had.

From God.—This executive body was not only

convinced of the fact that Christ was a teacher, but that he was a divine teacher, from God. In this he is acknowledged to be the promised one that should come from above; this gives him the greatest authority to teach.

There are teachers without authority, who are false teachers, by whom many are led astray, which our Lord had proved himself not to be. The language of the text implies that they had taken his works under a technical consideration, and the only conclusion to which they could honestly arrive was that he came from God. This of course is acknowledging his divinity; it is saying in plain words that: *Thou art the Son of God*, which gives a reason for the legality of his teaching, which gives joy to all of his followers.

For no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him.—Here Nicodemus gives a reason for the conclusion to which he and others had arrived; in this he shows the judgment of a wise man. A miracle is an extraordinary display of divine power which none but God can do; this Nicodemus, an expert in law, knew and acknowledged. These men had taken the pains to examine the works of Jesus, both from a *scientific* and *philosophical* standpoint, and the frank and open statement here made by Nicodemus, may be referred to on any occasion to prove the miracles of Christ to

be genuine, for if there had been any possible chance of proving them otherwise, the members of the Sanhedrim would have resorted to it, for they stood ready and willing to condemn his works if they could possibly find a legitimate cause, but failing to find evidence to condemn, they were made by the greatness of his wonderful works to confess that he was from God.

Dear brethren, this is what we are to do, convince the world that we have been sent from God by our good works, and when we do this the world will acknowledge the legality of our mission, receive us and go with us to glory.

SERMON IX.

THE BLESSED INVITATION.

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money ; come ye, buy, and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread ? and your labor for that which satisfieth not ? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me : hear, and your soul shall live ; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people. Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel ; for he hath glorified thee. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.—ISA. LV : 1-7.

AN invitation is counted worthy to the extent that the one is worthy who gives it. Were a peasant to give an invitation to the public saying: Come and dine with me at my table, for I am giving a feast for the merry-making of my friends, numbers would say: Ah, it will not be much, for that man is not able to entertain a guest with any propriety. Consequently, there would be but little said about him and it; the newspaper men would think it beneath

their dignity to speak of it, and the mighty and great would regard him as being unworthy of their notice.

But were a rich and great man, the king, to give notice to the public that he was preparing a feast, and invited all his subjects to come, sit down at his table, eat and be merry in the richness of his household, and that there would be no charges at the door, the country would be exultant with the shouts of praise and thanksgiving to this great man for his act of charity; the telegraph wires would chat the news from city to city, from state to state, and from country to country, and the press would roll off her sheets of commendation, that would excite the admiration of the world.

Now, sinner, the King of Glory has made provision for the comfort and the enjoyment of the whole world.

He is praiseworthy.—In knowledge, for his understanding surpasses all; in righteousness great, for he is the acme of perfection; in grace great, for he is abundantly merciful; in riches great, for creation belongs to him, the silver and gold are all his, and the cattle on a thousand hills; and in promise great, because he ever remains the same without the slightest variation or shadow of turning. He it is who says: “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye,

buy, and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk, without money and without price." "All things in Christ are ready now."

Those invited stand in great need of his mercy. The prophet here speaks to a crooked and perverse people, that have wandered from God, and made mock of his offered mercies; they have left the path of peace and are going about seeking worldly lust, and are perishing in passion and pride. He calls unto them saying: "Incline your ear, and come unto me, and hear, and your soul shall live." It is the sinner that is called; he it is that needs the cleansing, the healing and the saving; he it is that has strayed from God, and now the thing to be done is to find acceptance with God through Jesus Christ, and grace will be given to help in every time of need. Give no attention to "Obstinate," and listen not to "Mr. Worldly-wise Man," but press with vigor on.

Our Master is no respecter of persons; all who will may; though your sins be as mountains, come, he can take them all away; your heart, though it may be black, yet the blood of our dear Redeemer will, wash it clean, white as snow. Just forsake your evil way and thoughts, and come trusting and believing, and you shall find rest for your soul.

The invitation should be accepted with gladness by all.—The prophet speaks to those who are blest to live; numbers have fallen in their sins, therefore

the invitation should be in no means slighted by any, but should be received with joy. Sinners who are blest to live should not live another hour in their sins, knowing that many have fallen in their sight, and some even by their side, and that they are yet in the land of the living, where they can flee from the city of destruction, and be saved from the fiery wrath of indignation.

Aside from that, he who gives the invitation is worthy of respect. All sinners, whether or not rich in worldly goods, are poor in the sight of God, nothing more than filthy rags; and every one should feel it his duty, when God calls, to come with a thankful heart. It is a privilege which, if lost, can never be regained, and one that fallen angels would, if they could, gladly accept. Therefore says the King of kings and Lord of lords:

“Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near.” Dives in hell would have gladly accepted a seat in the kingdom if it could have been awarded him, but too late! too late!

So with all the devils of hell; while the dashing flames of torment flash over their faces, they would, I fancy, with gladness ride out of hell on the dashing waves of God's wrath, and make their way to the table of salvation, if they could only find a welcome there.

SERMON X.

THE SOLEMN WARNING.

Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die, and not live.—II. KINGS, XX: 1.

HEZEKIAH was, likely, a good man; he feared God and strove to keep his commands, and God stood with him in the subjugation of his enemies.

The text reveals him to us this morning a sick man even unto death. His suffering is set forth by Josephus in a two-fold nature: *first*, he was of a severe distemper of body; and *secondly*, he was afflicted in mind, because he was about to die leaving no children to share the glory of his kingdom which he would leave behind.

The prophet of God walks up, and as directed by the God of heaven, tells him that he shall die and to set his house in order. In such a melancholy circumstance the king was certainly racked with agony; and the words of the prophet come to us with considerable weight and meaning.

Thus saith the Lord.—It is God that speaks from above; thus, the earth must be still and give ear to

his words. God is God and beside him there is none; and what he says there is none to revoke. Isaiah had not the power to change his words, and Hezekiah seems to recognize this great fact; therefore he loses no time in doubting the prophet, but turns his attention in plea to God.

Oh that the world to-day would have such regards for truth! Nowadays, if the preacher proclaims the whole truth as it is in Christ, many people complain and want him to talk to please them. His preaching must be adapted directly to their taste or they seek to revenge him, when they should be upon their knees acknowledging their transgression and entreating the Almighty to stay his hand of wrath.

God is "Alpha" and "Omega." "He plants his footstep in the sea and rides upon the storm;" heaven is his throne, the clouds his chariot, the earth his footstool, and *hell* his prison-house. His words are laws by which the world must be governed, led to eternal rest or sent to everlasting woe.

Set thine house in order—very emphatic. Here man is called upon to make a very necessary preparation; a strange visitor is standing at the door ready to walk in; set your house in order, men, that he may find the floor swept and well garnished.

How is it to be set in order? By exercising faith in the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, coming out

from among the world, and being born in the kingdom of God, of the water and Spirit. This will make you an heir to the kingdom of God and a brother of the Lord. Now comes the important question for every one to ask himself: Have I made the preparation, am I at peace with God, is it well with my soul, and am I ready to depart unto death? *For thou shall die and not live.*

All man is human and SHALL DIE. However sad the words, "SHALL DIE," appear to us, they cannot be erased from the divine code. God says so, and it must be so. The assertion is backed up with proof handed down through all generations. Adam died and all his posterity must follow on. Hezekiah, notwithstanding God added fifteen years to his life, died

God does all he can for man; he allows him space to repent, and when he will not repent death walks among the dry bones and makes his abode for eternity.

Death is God's fixed destiny of all men, not the poor and the low alone, but the high and the rich as well. A poor saint in this church died some months ago, and on the same day Gen. Grant died. Widow — died the other day, and on the same day the Vice President of the United States and the King of Spain died.

The King of kings has so decreed
That the rich and poor together must go;
His power is great, his throne is high,
And none can escape his watchful eye.

“Man that is born of a woman is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not.”

SERMON XI.

PRAYER AND ITS EFFECTS.

Men ought always to pray, and not to faint.—LUKE XVIII : 1.

It need not be surprising to us that our Lord should here exhort his disciples to prayer, for he had just set before them in graphic terms his second coming.

He bases the parable upon the supplication of a poor widow to a wicked and hard-hearted judge who feared not God nor regarded man. Judges ruled over the Israelites in the early days of their freedom, for Samuel was a judge. But it is not to be supposed that they all were like Samuel, workers of righteousness, but that some were wicked and cruel like some of the kings that ruled. Therefore we see that his parable is in common with the customs of Israel, and it is reasonable to suppose that those whom he was addressing could apprehend him in the fullness of meaning.

The words of the text appear to me to be an introduction to the parable, while the parable itself

teaches the philosophy of prayer, in relation to which I desire to make a few brief statements.

I. *What is Prayer?* My answer is four-fold.

1. *Prayer is the act of addressing God in supplication.*—It is thought to be a great thing to communicate with a man of honor, but is a greater thing to communicate with God. And it is indeed a wonder that man, sinful creature, should find favor with God. And it can only be accounted for in that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” The man Christ Jesus is our mediator. He stands between God and man and intercedes for us, and all that God grants us is for his sake, for we are poor, wretched and needy, having nothing to bring worthy of his notice as a plea for his mercy, for all of our righteousness is but filthy rags in his sight. When we seek him every word is a supplication, else we find him not.

2. *Prayer is the act of confessing transgression.*—Forgiveness of sin must ever be based upon repentance and confession, for to seek pardon without the knowledge of crime, or offense, would be mere folly. Our Saviour brought out this great truth when he said that the well need no physician. It is when the soul feels that he is a sinner and the chief of transgressors that he seeks pardon at the feet of Jesus,

our crucified Redeemer. Then, and only then, he comes acknowledging his transgression, for his sin is before him. "Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, and hath scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree."

3. *Prayer is thanksgiving and praise.*—The soul that comes acceptably to God is never insensible to the fact that he lives daily, in the mercy of God. He can readily see that he has been the recipient of many blessings from the bountiful hand of God and not one of which he has merited; and while pondering over the wonderfulness of God's great mercies bestowed upon him, he breaks forth and cries, "I will praise Thee, O Lord, with my whole heart," yes, "in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee." In the absence of thanksgiving and praise, there is no prayer.

4. *Prayer is the act of communing with God.*—Here we come to the essence of prayer.

"Prayer is the breath of God in man,
 Returning whence it came;
 Love is the sacred fire within,
 And prayer the rising flame.

"It gives the burdened spirit ease,
 And soothes the troubled breast;
 Yields comfort to the mourners here,
 And to the weary rest."

II. *Why should we always pray?*—This is a question profound, for its depth of thought. The text is exclamatory, but not so written, for it sets forth a duty assigned man for a great reason. We should remember that our Lord had just told his disciples about the judgment day, and had stated to them, in plain facts, many things respecting it, some of which were heart sickening and soul discouraging. The greater part of that discourse* is a prediction, the fulfillment of which is sure, and seems to stand as a reason why men ought always to pray and not faint. It sets forth the frailty of man and the certainty of judgment. Hence let us notice some of the reasons why we should always pray

1. *We should always pray because we are sinners by nature.*—The depravity of our nature subjects us to constant warfare. To this the apostle Paul had an eye single when he said: “I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the

* Chapter xvii.

law of sin.” * This being the true state of our nature, we can not stop praying else we will be overcome by the enemy. The warfare is constant, and we only get hourly and daily supplies of grace. Therefore we must keep on praying.

“ My soul, be on thy guard;
 Ten thousand foes arise;
 The hosts of sin are pressing hard
 To draw thee from the skies.

“ Oh, watch and fight and pray;
 The battle ne'er giver o'er;
 Renew it boldly every day,
 And help divine implore.

“ Ne'er think the victory won,
 Nor lay thine armor down;
 Thy arduous work will not be done
 Till thou obtain thy crown.”

2. *We should always pray because we are poor and needy.*—Spiritually we are poor and spiritually we are needy, for every believer would fain say, “ Lord, I am the least of all thy saints, and not worthy of the least of all thy mercies.”

All of our help comes from the Lord, for our Saviour has well and truly said, “ Without me ye can do nothing.”

“ Lord revive us, Lord revive us,
 All our help must come from thee.”

* Rom. vii: 21-25.

III. *How should we always pray ?*—In answering this question we shall have to confine ourselves to the word of God, for we know not how to pray as we ought. Thanks be to God that he has told us how we should seek him.

The parable from which I have taken my text is itself a law, guiding us in prayer to God our Father, whom our Lord sets over against a hard-hearted judge that, “feared not God nor regarded man,” and did at last grant the request of a poor widow who continued to call upon him for justice for fear that her continual coming would weary him. And after stating the plea of the woman, and the action of the judge, he asked ; “Shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them ?”

The woman as set forth in this parable came to the judge humbly, habitually, secretly, for no one is said to have accompanied her. Her prayer seems to accord with reason and common sense; she did not ask the judge to do any unreasonable thing, for the function of his office bound him to properly measure justice to all, and but for the hardness of his heart the poor woman would not have had to come so often, for he would have done her justice without any fear of being worried. Then let us notice.

1. *We must pray in faith.*—Without faith it is

impossible to please God, for “he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” Faith is prerequisite to prayer; for we must first believe in the existence of God, *i.e.*, that there is a God all wise, infinite, and all powerful, and that we must believe he is merciful and that he will reward us.

2. *We must pray in secret.*—“Thou when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.” The word secret here may be understood figuratively as well as literally. It does not necessarily mean that we must not pray but in an entirely literally inclosed room, but that we should seclude ourselves in spirit, come to God alone, separated from every worldly attraction, and have our every thought upon the Lord. Then we pray not to be heard of men, but of God. Men go not to heaven in crowds, but alone, and he who would seek the Lord acceptably must seek him alone; and whether it be in the congregation of the people, in your chamber, or on the housetop, if you are forgetful of the world you are in the secret closet.

3. *We must pray in humility.*—Self must be forgotten altogether. “And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up

into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

“And the Publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” *

4. *Our prayer must accord with reason.* — “When ye pray use not vain repetitions as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.”

Once there was a servant woman who, on going to and from her place of labor, had to walk around a mountain. One day on complaining about the mountain obstructing her path, some one told her that the Lord had promised to move mountains and would move that one for her if she had faith only as a mustard seed. So on going home that night she prayed God to move the mountain; and on returning next morning and finding it there still, she said, “That is just what I expected.”

* Luke xviii: 9-14.

God moves with reason. Is it reasonable to suppose that God should have moved a mountain to accommodate one woman, when he might have inconvenienced a thousand other persons? No! No! We must not complain against God for not answering our prayer, for oftentimes it does not accord with reason.

Then we must say *that prayer that is prayer is in perfect harmony with God's will.*—Christ has taught us to pray: “Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven.” Total submission to the will of God is the pivot on which turns the whole action of our acceptance.

If you want to be happy pray for the will of God. If you want to pray acceptably pray for the will of God. If you want heaven here below pray for the will of God.

5. *We must pray in spirit and in truth.*—“God is a Spirit: and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.” We cannot seek God in the flesh. We cannot see him with the temporal eye, but with the spiritual eye.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

God lives in Spirit, God moves in Spirit, and if we would find him we must seek him in Spirit.

6. *We must pray importunately.*—“Men ought

always to pray and not to faint.” Because the widow continued to call upon the judge he said within himself, “though I fear not God nor regard man, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.”

If constant plea could move the hard-hearted judge to mercy, what effect do you suppose it would have upon God, who is a loving Father? God may bear long with us, but in his own time will answer. Jacob wrestled with the angel until the breaking of the day. The Israelites were afflicted by cruel bondage over two hundred years, during which time God heard their groans, and in his own time he called Moses and sent him forth to deliver them. Our fathers suffered bondage in this land two hundred and forty-four (244) years, during which time God heard their groans, and in his own time his strong hand brought deliverance. They prayed without ceasing and God has blessed us abundantly; God help us to pray always and faint not. Let the peoples pray, let the nations pray; yes, let all the race of man pray, and sorrow and pain will flee away and peace and joy will come speedily, for prayer is our life and our all.

“Prayer is the contrite sinner’s voice
Returning from his ways,
While angels in their songs rejoice,
And cry, Behold, he prays.

“ Prayer is the Christian’s vital breath,
The Christian’s native air,
His watchword at the gates of death;
He enters heaven with prayer.”

SERMON XII.

THE WHEAT AND THE TARES.

The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field : But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field ? from whence then hath it tares ? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this.

The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up ? But he said, Nay ; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest : and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them : but gather the wheat in my barn.—MATT. XIII : 24-30.

As to how we should treat the wicked, the false professors in Christ's Church here on earth, there is no part of Scripture more instructive than this parable. It is light in darkness. What would we do without such a declaration of divine truth when we see hypocrites intermingled and tied up with the Christians, holding their hold in wickedness, as though no power could move them ?

In the world God's ministerial servants sow the

pure gospel truth, and the enemy, the devil, sows his tares.—The devil has been busy from the beginning, moving behind God, sowing tares, or strife, among his wheat, or truth. His first foot-prints are seen in the garden of Eden. After God had planted his truth in the heart of man he (Satan) came and sowed his tares, the seed of disobedience; and all along from that day to the present we can mark his foot-prints and count his evil works. In the antediluvian age, as God's servants declared righteousness, he deluded the nations and led them astray. Noah preached righteousness an hundred and twenty years, and only eight persons were saved from the great deluge.

In the prophetic age, as God's servants sowed the word of truth in the establishment of his kingdom, the devil sowed evil to confuse and destroy. And so it was when Christ came to inaugurate the kingdom that should break in pieces all other kingdoms. Therefore he puts forth this parable to let his followers know that while they sow the word of truth the devil sows falsehood in the same field, even in the same soil.

He says that the *tares were sown while men slept*, which is representative of night, darkness. Satan works in darkness. It also implied that it was on the night following the day on which the wheat was sown, for the tares came forth along with the wheat.

Hypocrites come into the church along with the true believer, tell their experience at the same time, are baptized in the same water, and receive the right hand of fellowship at the same time and place; and as the wheat and tares *grow together*, so the false pretender and the believer *rejoice together*, and they shout so very much alike that you cannot tell them apart until they begin to bear fruit.

Christ says that, it was when they had sprung up, *and brought forth fruit, that the tares appeared*. The blades of wheat and tares are just alike. Hence you can't tell them in growth until they show their fruit. So with the hypocrite and the true believer—they shout alike, but “By their fruit ye shall know them.”

When the servants saw that tares were sown in the midst of the wheat it appears that they were somewhat fretted, and desired to remove them at once. They asked the husbandman did he not sow all good wheat and whence came the tares? The husbandman seems to know what the servants did not know—that he had enemies. Therefore said he, the enemy hath done this. He would have them know that it was not the seed that he gave that had turned to tares, but the enemy had sown his seed of tares.

The religion of Jesus Christ never changes. Men are not born saints and then turn to devils; but, like Judas, are devils from the beginning.

The husbandman commanded the servants to let the tares grow until the day of harvest, and then he would send servants *who were his reapers*, and have them gathered and burned, for they might destroy much wheat.

God has reapers who can gather the hypocrites without confusion. We are sowers and not reapers. Sometimes when we see the prosperity of the wicked we would fain destroy them, like the disciples would have done to those transgressors who refused to entertain our Lord;* but our Lord teaches us to let them be until the day of harvest *and he will separate*.

God has power to stop the wicked, and will stop them at his appointed day, and there is none to say “Master, stop, why doeth thou these things?”

In death he cuts them down.—“I have seen the wicked spread himself like a green bay tree, yet he passed away.” Death is God’s reaper; he has a universal sway and his power is irresistible.

Strong men whom none can bind nor law control fall at the approach of death’s awful tramp. Worldly-wise men, that no wisdom can instruct nor council advise, lay their all at the feet of death when he calls.

Proud men, who invite nobody to their houses, and are too haughty to treat their fellow-man with respect, are made to open their doors to death and bow on their knees in homage to him.

* Luke ix: 54.

Dishonest men, who never pay their debts, moving through this world contracting to rob, when death comes along collecting and shows his bill are made to pay all they owe.

Death is an invisible traveller and an unexpected visitor. When he moves, not even his visage, so to speak, can be seen. All we can see is the mark of his hand.

He chills the mortal frame,
And takes the breath away;
And if the soul is not prepared
His travel is to shame.

For to the bar the man must go,
And stand before his God,
To give a true and accurate account
For all his doings below.

In the judgment, at the end of the world, God will separate the righteous from the wicked—the wicked to hell and the righteous to heaven. The great day of judgment is fast approaching, and we know not how close at hand, for we are taught in the Scripture that not even angels shall know the day nor the hour. At that day God will send his angels forth. “And they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” And again we are taught that, “When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then

shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.”*

It will be a day of great lamentation on the part of the wicked and much joy on the part of the righteous. Parents and children will be separated never to meet again, wives and husbands will go from each other never to meet again. Friends will depart never to meet again—some to hell and some to heaven.

Oh! what will be the hypocrite's plea
When in judgment he shall stand,
And find himself on sinking sand
And no mercy he can see?

Oh! where will be the sinner's stay,
When judgment calls him to the bar;
To see the Judge with glory crowned
And hear him cry “Sinner go away.”

While we contemplate the doom of the wicked our hearts are made sad, but let us turn our eyes toward the joy of the righteous. Our Lord says that he will gather the wheat, righteous, in heaven, his bosom. “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

* Matt. xxv: 31-33.

SERMON XIII.

FOR OR AGAINST.

He that is not with me, is against me ; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth.—MATT. XII. 30.

Two bodies can not occupy at the same time the same space; neither is the human mind capable of giving devotion, or worship, to two masters.

It is a fact which you all will admit that I cannot be here, in this church, behind this pulpit, on this platform, and at the same time in Richmond; and if you properly consider the fact that man has but one mind and heart, you will just as freely admit that it is equally impossible for him to serve God and the devil.

When there is a contest between two nations, countries, or peoples, civil law prohibits, or forbids, men serving both parties. Even in political campaigns men who would fain serve in the interest of two parties are pronounced traitors by public sentiment; and he who dare vote for two parties endangers his citizenship.

If the laws of nations be so strict, what think ye

about the law of God, from whose verdict there is no redress ?

The very creation of man teaches us that God made him for one space, not for two, for one service and not for two. But in this restriction he is made a free agent, and there is set before him two roads, one to heaven and the other to hell, " Behold, I set before you a blessing and a curse," and it is left for him to say on which of the two he will travel.

In the world there is a great conflict, sin and righteousness have no fellowship. Satan is the father of lies, the fountain-head of all wickedness.

God is the Father of truth, the fountain-head of all righteousness. This sets up in this world two kings and two kingdoms, one of which man must serve, but cannot at the same time serve both.

There are three classes of people in this world: one would serve God, one would serve the devil, and the other would serve, if it were possible, both God and the devil. One is hot, one is cold, and the other is neither hot nor cold; and out of these three there is but one class that God will have, and that is the class that will serve him alone. While the text serves as a lesson to the world, Christ seems to aim mainly at the latter class, namely, the Pharisees, a class of the Jews who professed to be very righteous, but not enough so to accept his teachings. They desired to serve God that he might save them,

and the devil that he might not harm them. They had the same faith in the devil they had in God, for their children performed miracles by trusting in God, and now they believe and say that Christ does the same, even to a greater extent, by trusting in the devil, for they said, "This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of devils." * They admitted the genuineness of his works, or miracles, but believed that he did them by trusting in the devil. We have many pharasaic people in this our day. They have faith in nobody but themselves.

Our Lord refutes their false theory, that the devil would cast out devils, by telling them that a kingdom divided against itself could not stand.

He would have them know that he subdued the devil, and cast him out by reason of his pre-eminence over him, and that he had no fellowship with him at all, and, more than that, they could not serve the devil and be with him.

To be with Christ there must be a perfect cooperation in all things. Where there is union of will there is union of effort. Then let us notice, if we would be with Christ—

I. *We must believe that he is the Messiah*, and that there is none other. To find the proper solution of any problem we should first seek its primary prin-

* Matt. xii: 24.

ciple; to advance successfully in any direction the primary branches must be well mastered.

What is true about temporal things stands equally true in relation to spiritual things. He who would know the way of salvation must first know Christ, for he is the chief corner stone in Zion, and he who would accept the plan of salvation must accept him, for he says: "I am the way, the truth and the life." If you do not believe in Christ your belief in his works amounts to nothing.

Right here the Jews make the sad mistake. They believe that Christ is a very good man, but he is not the Messiah, for they look for another greater than he which is yet to come.

This thing is a stone of stumbling to the nations of the earth to-day in their many secular affairs. They throw their good men aside, looking for better and greater.

The Negroes in their imprudent struggle to get new leaders are going backward every day.

The praise they give their present leaders if knitted into a web, would not hold a spider. Their leaders are being driven to private life, and they are left without representation. Last fall they attempted to change congressmen, and the result was they lost all.

Sinners look not for another but accept the present Saviour, who came into this world and died the death of the cross that you might live.

II. *We must believe firmly in his doctrine* as set forth in the New Testament, and none other.

Why am I a Baptist? I am a Baptist because I believe Christ was baptized, and baptism is his doctrine. How denominations of peoples can be with Christ and not do what he has commanded I know not, neither do they know—"He that is not with me is against me," and "he that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." There is no neutral ground; man must stand all for God, or none for God and all for the devil. No one can be for God and with God and doubt his word. The world has a sly way of claiming friendship,—doubt you and fight you, and at the same time claim to be your dearest friend; but this will not do for God; we may be deceived, but he can not be deceived for he knows the thoughts of men.

The Pharisees thought that they could so play upon Christ, but oh! no; he read the secrets of their hearts and knew the intentions of their minds better than they knew themselves.

Hypocrites in the church to-day are trying to hide themselves in the damning wrapper of deceit, and claim to be with Christ while at the same time their works are for the devil. I have seen men refuse to hear the Bible, the Holy Book of God, and vote against truth and right, saying that they go by their feelings;—such are the children of the devil.

III. *There must be a strict conformity to the law of God in obedience*,—i.e., we must be doers of the word and not hearers only. We must work as well as believe, for in wisdom the apostle James has said, “Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.” “Faith without works is dead.” The man that received one talent went and hid it, and when his Lord came to reckon with him he found that he had not put it to profitable service; therefore he disdained him for his slothfulness and cast him into outer darkness, where his portion was weeping and gnashing of teeth. If we believe Christ to be the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, we must go laboring in his vineyard, bringing others unto him.

Now, in conclusion, I would say that Christ will justly judge all who are against him; they shall be driven away into everlasting punishment.

“That awful day will surely come,
Th’ appointed hour makes haste,
When I must stand before my Judge,
And pass the solemn test.

“Thou lovely Chief of all my joys,
Thou Sovereign of my heart,
How could I bear to hear thy voice
Pronounce the sound, Depart!”

SERMON XIV.

CHRIST'S CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE.

But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.—MATT. XVIII : 6.

OUR Lord's knowledge of the Mosaic law is a firm proof of his being its author. He here refers to the most rigid statute of its code as being a suitable punishment for his servants' enemies. The assertion of the text shows that they are held in some esteem by him, and that he has not left them alone to the devil's persecutions, but that he exacts at the hands of their persecutors a compensation of deep suffering for each and every offense.

The text has reference directly to his followers who have been called out from among the world, and shows that they are known and regarded not as the world, but as the people of his special care; hence we notice:

I. *Christian distinction.*—The word Christian means one who follows Christ, and he who follows Christ will become like Christ, and to be like Christ is to resemble a glorious personage; for as many as

are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God and joint heirs with Christ, and are not slaves to fear, but children of the royal household of God. Those who are of the world know us not because we are not of them. To them we are a company of strangers; therefore they speak all manner of evil against us, knowing not what they do, being blindfolded by their own wickedness.

Our joy is not of this world. We have been called out of the world; hence our joy is in heaven, and our names are recorded in the Book of Life to the knowledge of angels and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in whose presence we shall dwell when heart and flesh shall fail

“If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be.” *Jesus Christ is our Companion.* “Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.”

Dear brethren, we step up from a servant's place. Here we know even what our master doeth; he leads us into mysteries respecting the kingdom of heaven; he takes us by his side, and says that we shall reign and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel; he leads us into paths of peace for his name's sake, anointeth our heads with oil and our cup runneth over; yea, goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our life. But the greatest of all is that *he has honored us with an everlasting salvation.*

He sets us above the angels in that he laid down his life for our souls. We are not only his friends but friends of his love. No greater love has any man than he who lays down his life for his friend; to suffer and die for another is a love beyond measure. He has made us kings and priests who were all defiled with sin; he has also made us the fruits of the Spirit who were once groaning and travailing in pain and sin; and now we do know if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him, for at the latter day we shall be judges of our enemies, for the apostle says, The saints shall judge the world.

II. *We are the objects of his care.*—This throws us back on the purpose of God the Father, as having to do with the perseverance of the saints, for “Whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” Christ stands as the eternal daysman, with one hand on the throne of God, and the other holding his saints, and says, “None shall pluck them out of my hand,” showing that he has made their welfare the subject of his planning; and in the most dreadful times of tribulations, when the devil lifts the very flood-gates of hell (so to speak) against his church, when the saint is wrestling with the rolling waves of tribulations, he says: “Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”

He has given the angels charge concerning us.—The angels are ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who are the servants of God. David says: “He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.” “Take heed,” says Christ, “that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.” Well may it be said to the saint as he marches up Zion hill, pushing through dangers on every hand, “Let not your heart be troubled,” for the plans of our dear Redeemer are laid and the foundation is sure, and the children of the most high God will be landed safely home.

The angels of God are immortal spirits and know all things that are done in earth, and there is not a single trouble that the saints have in this world but what the angels know it well. They are not only wise but are also strong. God gives them strength to protect his saints. When the angel of the Lord smote the camp of the Assyrians an hundred four score and five thousand were found dead.

III. *God will punish our enemies.* —“It were better for him,” says Christ, “that a mill stone were hanged about his neck and that he were drowned in the depths of the sea.”

This punishment is very intense—there is none to surpass it in horror; but it is not too severe for the crime, for Christ's servants sustain such an endeared relation to him that to offend one of them is to offend him, and to offend him is to offend the Prince of Peace. What father is he that can see his dear, beloved child suffer by the blows of an intruder without being infused with indignant wrath? Or what mother can stand and see her child unjustly persecuted without a bleeding heart? Parents risk their lives for the rescue of their children.

What think ye of God, who holds creation in his hands? Do you think he takes no notice of our sufferings? All Daniel had to do when in the lions' den was to call on him, and it is all that any saint has to do, and he will tear away the stars from the skies and empty the floods from the channels of the mighty deep to rescue his smallest child? "Call upon me," says he, "in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee." "Prove me now herewith, saith the Lords of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

When he told his disciples to go into all the world his promise was to be with them until the world shall end. This promise does not alone imply that he will be present, but that he will defend them as well; and wheresoever the enemy is found with his

up-lifted sword to slay the upright in heart, Jesus meets him in the defence of his little ones; though he may spread himself like a green bay tree, yet he shall pass away in the very pit which he dug for our dwelling-place; for every evil done to God's people he must account. Justice looks him in the face with the condemning eye, and says, "Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of my least ones, you have done it unto me," and when in the fullness of guilt he lifts up his eyes and finds himself in the jaws of iniquity, being smitten by the wrath of God, his sin being greater than he can bear, he feels that his sorrow would be less if he were in the sea with a millstone about his neck.

To offend one of these little ones is to offend the eternal Judge, at whose will the *world must bow*. It is said of Alexander that once, while he stood on the battle-field and viewed the approaching armies as they confronted his ranks in battle array, he said to his soldiers, "Fall back, their armies are too great; we will wait until they scatter their ranks, or I am enabled to increase my courage."

Our Lord's enemies have never been too great for his courage; the greatest of the great and the strongest of the strong have been brought low for allowing themselves to offend the people of God's choice. Haman built a gallows for Mordecai, but God put him on it. Let me recall your minds to the

narrative of Jezebel's death.* She who slew the prophets of God, she who caused Naboth to be murdered. Her death was one of shame and horror. Being thrown from a lofty window she was dreadfully bruised by the wall while she fell among wild horses; they trampled her body lifeless, afterwards her bones were gnawed by dogs. This infamous woman had better been in the depth of the sea with a millstone about her neck than to have been one to persecute the cause of God. There is Nero; with all of his sagacity he was brought to shame. He took delight in persecuting the Christians, he died the death of suicide. The word *offend* does not alone imply to misuse, but also to *lead astray*.

Some people take great delight in leading others astray. How many good lives have been made miserable by following the advice of others? How many pure lives have been made drunkards by following the inducements set before them by others? Some backsliders make it a point to try to bring every church member down on equal footing with themselves; but woe be unto them. God in due time will repay them.

“Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.”

* 2 Kings ix: 30-37.

SERMON XV.

OUR GOD AND THE FIERY FURNACE.

Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace.—DANIEL III: 17.

WHEN Cyaxares made a charge on the Assyrians he was joined by Nabopolassar, who assisted him in overthrowing them and gaining a complete victory. Afterwards the possession of Babylonia was given him (Nabopolassar) as a reward for his stout loyalty in battle; he therefore became the first monarch of the new Babylonian kingdom.

In the days of Josiah, Pharaoh Necho captured Carchemish, which belonged to the Chaldeans, and made it a tributary to his dominion. This seems to have waxed hot the fury of Nabopolassar, and being stricken in years, he sends his son Nebuchadnezzar to retake this city, and redeem his subjects.

Here the great monarch came to public notice. He overpowered the Egyptians at Carchemish and retook the city and restored it to his father's dominion. As his father passed away he took the throne and carried Babylon to its highest glory. Having sharpened his sword on the Egyptians, he looked

around for unsubdued parts of the world, on which he might try his skill for war, and his longing eyes fell on the Phoenicians and Canaanites. He marshalled his hosts for war and marched down against them with about 300,000 men and 10,000 chariots; he took Jerusalem and carried away some of the Jews captives to Babylon, among whom we find Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah, and Daniel, whom he trained in the Chaldean language to be members of the court.

He proved himself mighty in battle by gaining many conspicuous achievements; but his greatest works of distinction are not seen in his conquests, but in rebuilding the city of Babylon, which seems to have outstripped any city of ancient times in grandeur. So great was its beauty that he seems himself to have been greatly amazed.

After he had completed it, he walked through it, and looking back on its broad dimensions said: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and for the honor of my majesty?" But we must not dwell too long on introductory remarks, as I want to speak mainly about God and the fiery furnace and those who were cast therein.

Then let us notice:

I. *Our God whom we serve.*—These words were spoken by Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

They set forth the being of God in the strongest terms. They do not only affirm the fact of God's existence but assert their faith in him by saying: "Our God." Nebuchadnezzar's greatness had made him mad; he thought himself God and the only God, therefore he built a golden image and placed it on the plain of Dura, in representation of himself, and commanded every man to fall down and give it worship. But, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego had not forgotten the charge that God gave their forefathers when he brought them out of Egypt: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Nebuchadnezzar desired to make all nations of his great and vast empire an unit in religion, and undoubtedly thought that these three Hebrews, as he had promoted them to important positions in his kingdom, would be the first to bow; but not so. These men were responsible to God for themselves and therefore had no right to conform to idolatry.

They held their religion in high esteem, and were unwilling to forsake their God for another. Some men will tell you that they do many things against their will; that being surrounded by other things they are bound to do certain things. Not so. We should always remember "our God," and remembering "our God," stand by "our God," have faith in "our God," and be ye sure "our God" will protect us, and deliver us out of every trouble.

II. *Is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace.*—Burning to death in a furnace was an ancient mode of capital punishment. Nebuchadnezzar declared that all who did not bow to his image should be cast into the fiery furnace. He issued his decree to be carried into effect a certain day. This image was to be dedicated with music and great pomp, and at the sound of the music every knee should bow. And it seems that his edict was obeyed to perfection by all except Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who declared that they would not bow.

I suppose there were some mad with these men, anyhow, because they had been promoted by the king, and had been watching for quite a time to find something against them, for some men, like Haman, can see no peace so long as “Mordecai sits at the gate;” so when they saw that these men would not bow they in haste bear the news to the king. Nebuchadnezzar at once calls for them, and failing to induce them to bow, he gave word for the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than usual and these men bound and cast in. His orders were obeyed with speed.

So anxious was Nebuchadnezzar, it seems, to hear their screams and see the flames gnaw their flesh and bones, he came to the furnace himself. As they brought them to the mad flames to cast them forth, the king’s servants were consumed and God’s

servants walked about unharmed. *He is able to deliver them.* As the king stood and looked in, he saw four men, and so bright were the garments of the fourth, I fancy, that he could hardly look upon him, for he said that he looked like the Son of God.

Dear brethren, this is what the Apostle Paul, in the 11th chapter of Hebrews, calls faith.

“ Oh, for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe;
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.”

They numbled themselves to the binders, believing that God would deliver them. They stood in the presence of the king, surrounded by all the glory of his kingdom, and said: “ O, Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter; if it be so our God whom we serve is able to deliver us out of thine hand, O king.”

III. *He did deliver them.* — “ Fear not, little flock, it is your Father’s good will to give you the kingdom.” “ I will be with you until the world shall end.” “ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” Oh, what blessed promises and affirmations are brought to us in the word of God! Enough to disperse the darkest clouds and give us day for night.

These men were seen walking about; they were thrown in bound, but walked out unbound. God always loosens his children in trouble. The devil may tie us, but God is sure to untie us. The king says that he saw them walking about, but does not say what they were doing. I almost know that they were praising God in the highest, in words like these: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." When they came out they were examined and not even the smell of fire was on their garments. The complete victory, dear brethren, is the kind we want; this is the kind that God gives us. It would not have been much of a victory for them to have come out wounded, their clothes burned off them and their faces all disfigured. Every trial withstood calls for a promotion. The king promoted the men.

Every time we resist one temptation, the abler we are to rebut the next. Our troubles do us good, they make our crown more bright and show the greatness of our king, when we resist and come out unhurt.

They came out bringing the glory of God upon them; this is what we must do. There are many burning fiery furnaces in this world. We are sur-

rounded on every hand by temptations of every kind; they are burning fiery furnaces, and we are to come out of them unhurt. It is only when we come out unhurt that we gain a victory over sin for God, which will make men respect him.

They may be so tied down to idols, like Nebuchadnezzar, that they cannot let go, but they will acknowledge his power and pay respect thereto.

But if we would have God to deliver us, we must serve him. These men said, "our God whom we serve." They did not only claim him to be theirs; they were also his. They believed in him and served him as well. Is the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego your God? If so, do you serve him? If you do he will deliver you out of the burning fiery furnace.

SERMON XVI.

THE TREE OF LIFE.

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life.
—REV. II. 7.

DEAR BRETHREN : We are to learn a lesson this morning out of the book of Revelation, of which there is said so very much of its mystery.

It was written about the year ninety-six by that meek disciple, John, who is said to have rested very near the Saviour. He wrote while in Patmos as he was directed by the Holy Spirit, who gave utterance to every word.

He claims no part of its authorship to himself, but gives it all to God, who commanded him to write mysteries to be sealed; and they are sealed and that well, for no one has ever yet been able to fathom their depth. It is a subject of study that awaits our arrival into the fair fields of an unbecloved glory, when and where we “shall know even as we are known.”

But we thank God, however great the mystery may be, the way of salvation is here made so plain

that the way-faring man though a fool need not err therein: for it plainly says: "Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have right to the tree of life;" and his commands are plainly revealed in the Holy Scriptures.

I. *Heaven is promised to us on conditions.*—None but the righteous shall see God. A great many people go about boasting of predestination as having so very much to do with their salvation as to give them a right to eternal life irrespective of their obedience to God's laws, forgetting that they are to work out their own salvation.

God's willingness to save a sinner is manifested in his abundance of love, and the sinner has claims on him only when he loves him with all his mind, soul, and strength, and his neighbor as himself.

"If ye love me ye will keep my sayings." Where there is no love there is no desire to obey, and where there is no love for God there is no obedience to him, and where there is no obedience to him there is no claim on him.

It would be incompatible with the law of right for a sinner to be saved by God aside from obedience, for to do so would be saving him against his will, and this would be divesting man of his free agency

It would be making him do what he has no inclination to do, and to fill heaven with such souls it would at once cease to be heaven. Therefore Christ

has said: "Whosoever will may come and drink of the water of life freely;" not that a man shall be made to come, whether he wants to, but when he feels that he needs a Redeemer and wants a Saviour and is willing to deny himself, take up the cross and follow Jesus by keeping God's commands, and overcoming temptations, then and there the kingdom is his, and he is blest with an everlasting salvation.

This obedience hinges on faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, on whom he lays hold with all confidence, believing that he is able to save him and will save him, because he has come unto him by faith, trusting him for grace.

" My faith would lay her hand
On that dear head of thine,
While like a penitent I stand,
And there confess my sins."

The tree of life is planted in the midst of the Paradise of God, about the centre of his glory inside of the garden of everlasting life, and at the gate is placed God's cherubims, and a flaming sword which turns every way to keep back intruders from enjoying its glory; and outside are dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and liars. He who would enter in to the tree of life, must overcome them all, and he can only overcome by fighting like a faithful soldier, trusting in God, who is the author and finisher of all faith.

“ Must I be carried to the skies
 On flowery beds of ease,
 While others fought to win the prize,
 And sailed through bloody seas!

“ Sure I must fight, if I would reign;
 Increase my courage, Lord;
 I’ll bear the toil, endure the pain,
 Supported by thy word.”

II. *The tree is everlasting life.*—This is the reward that Christ has in reserve for all his faithful soldiers of the cross: “ If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him.” This reward is pictured out in the most magnanimous style; it is described in many ways, but in every way it is grandeur and beauty.

It is spoken of once as a pure river of water clear as crystal proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, representing the ceaseless mercies of God for sinful man. It is spoken of again as white robes, representing the beauty with which the saints will be adorned.

It is again spoken of as hidden manna, representing his glory as being hid from the enjoyment of the wicked. It is again spoken of as a white stone, on which a new name is written, representing the grandeur which we shall wear as a mark of redemption. All of these tend to point out one thing, *viz.*, the beauty of eternal life. But who are they that

shall enjoy this great reward? None but those who overcome the flesh and the devil.

We are surrounded, dear brethren, in this world, on every hand by the powers of hell; and to fight successfully, we must lay aside every weight which doth so easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us. “He that continues to the end the same shall be saved.” “Not every one that sayeth Lord, Lord, shall enter into my kingdom, but he who doeth the will of my father which is in heaven.”

The Bridegroom will say in that morning when he shall meet his bride: “These are they who have come up through great tribulations, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Then they shall greet the welcome applause as he shall give utterance: “Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” These are they that shall enjoy the life eternal and sit on thrones helping to judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

“When we have been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We have no less day to sing God’s praise
Than when we first begun.”

III. *We shall eat of the Tree.*—What will make the saints’ joy so very intense is, that they will feast thereon. To surround a man by all the wealth in

the world and not allow him to slake his hunger or quench his thirst, he would be miserable. Eating and drinking is a great part of man's enjoyment, and it is quite a glorious thing to know that we shall eat of this tree. "Blessed is he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God;" for "they shall hunger no more, neither shall they thirst any more."

We shall not eat as slaves nor servants, but as children of the household of our God; for our Lord has already said: "Ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom." It will be one heavenly time when we all, dear brethren and sisters, shall sit down at our Lord's table in the kingdom of our God, to come out no more, where congregation never breaks up and Sabbath has no end.

I fancy that we shall know each other there; parents and children will meet; husbands and wives will meet; friends and relatives will meet, to separate no more. It will be ending below and beginning above.

Earth will have no more prayers made for sinners. Salvation's door will be closed, God will have stopped the wheel of time below, and eternity with her ceaseless years will have walked in; while the righteous shall be sitting at the table of their Lord, the wicked will be driven away to dwell in utter darkness.

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of Life."

SERMON XVII.*

THE PRE-EMINENCE OF GOD'S LAW.

CREATION is governed by God's formed laws. Without law the earth would be a deep conglomeration of confusion—nature would lose herself in space, and nations would lose themselves in existence.

The law of nature governs the development of creation. But for this law fowls would grow as large as beasts, beasts would grow as large as houses, and men would grow as large as mountains. The world in its revolution would move far out of place, and the solar system would come down to earth.

This law furthermore governs every plant that grows, and matures every grain that ripens. All nature in its growth and development is held in subjection to God's will.

The great law of gravitation and the great powers of electricity are here embodied.

The law of morality seeks to regulate man's

*Series of sermons on the First, Second and Third Commandments, which will be continued in the next volume.

actions in his great advancement in civilization; without which no system of government could have ever been formed. *Divine law* teaches man his duty to God.

These laws, moral and divine, have only to do with rational creatures, making them responsible to God for every action; they seek to elevate humanity to greatness and power, and are truly its safeguard; they are so great in power that if adhered to and obeyed can make man in action like an angel, in wisdom like God.

But for these laws man's animal nature would always overpower his intelligence, and he would ever remain uncultivated. These laws, natural, divine, and moral, are ordained of God to so great a purpose that the violation of either brings suffering.

There is attached to all a penalty which is inflicted on every violation.

Take a walk through this world and count the marks of God's vengeance on *nature's* violations. In the vegetable kingdom, you will find many starvations, and in the animal kingdom many creatures disfigured.

Take a walk through the world, and take a peep at *mortality's* violations by individuals, nations and peoples; and should you walk by the jails and penitentiaries, your heart would throb with sympathy for suffering mortals, and if you could be so fortunate as to

get a peep in hell upon the transgressors of divine law, you would go mad because of griefs and lamentations. God has special claims on the world by reason of creation, and he receives perfect obedience from all things save man — hence his law is necessary, with which I purpose to deal in my series. Man would be responsible to God for obedience if his law, about which we are going to talk, had not been given, because “The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse;” and in every rational being there is conscience, the very organ of law. But God is not satisfied with individuals and nations having a mere knowledge of his existence, he desires that there be a regulation to their every action; therefore he gives this great law, spoken by his own mouth and written with his own hand, which has been preserved through all generations to us without the alteration of a single letter, meaning all to us it meant to the Hebrews. So very great was his care in giving it that when Moses broke the tablets of stone on which it was written, he called him back and rewrote it, the only time he was ever known to repeat a single action of his work.

None of its meaning was taken away or the effects lost in the coming of Christ, for he says: “Think not

I have come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.”

The ten commandments we cannot afford to do without. What we want and need is to inculcate these doctrines in the hearts of all nations and people. If this is done, we will have better people, better nations, and a better government: children would be rocked in the cradle of obedience, and reared with decision of character and exalted culture.

A country wants no better government than God's law, a nation no better safeguard; with it to obey it, we are a great people, without we are a lost nation. God speaks with authority, saying: “I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”

SERMON XVIII.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.—EXODUS XX: 3.

THE Hebrews had accustomed themselves to practice in their worship what the Egyptians practiced, polytheism. The Egyptians had gods many. Whatever may have been their religious faith in the beginning of their civilization, historians affirm that they did become so very vain as to stoop to idolatry.

They made gods of beasts, serpents, crocodiles, and all such. Their chief god was Apis, a bull, whose throne was at Memphis, to whom they dedicated their finest temple.

Tradition says that they assigned as reason for casting their worship in this direction that: "Men once rebelled and drove the gods out of heaven, and they fled to the earth and concealed themselves in these animals." The Hebrews having conformed to Egyptian worship to quite an extent, the first thing God's law undertakes is, to disabuse their mind of idol-worship and bring them to serve him, the true living God; therefore his law calls upon all

mankind to throw away all idols, and turn from every vainglory, and come to him, whose going forth is from the ends of the heavens, and “whose dominion has no end, beside whom there is no other.”

1st. *We should have no other gods before him in obedience.*—In civil government we find many law-makers, but in divine government we find but one. God is the law-maker, law-giver, and executive. The facts inculcated in the ten commandments, humanity’s true guide, were spoken by God himself, and written with his own hand, and handed down to us through ages without the alteration of a single letter, meaning and teaching us just as much as it did the children of Israel. God calls upon man every where and at all times for obedience; his orders, must be obeyed or the penalty of the law suffered: “We must come at his command to heaven or else depart to hell.”

When the children of Israel had come into the desert of Zin, in the southern district of Arabia, they thirsted for water; God told Moses to speak to the rock, but he smote it with his rod, for which act of disobedience he entered not the promised land.* God’s law does not assert one thing and mean another—it means what it says, and it is a fearful thing to disobey God. The whole of the New

* Num. xx: 8-11.

Testament as well as the Old strictly enforces obedience to God.

“Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell.”

Infidels and atheists tie themselves down to the theories of men in search for the first cause of all effects instead of taking God’s word as a guide, and the result is, that they go further in darkness; when the Holy Bible speaks and says: “Have faith in God.”

The world but little inquires nowadays to know what God says, but is always seeking to know what man says. The civil law of this country gives the railroad companies the right to run their cars on the Sabbath; the divine law forbids. God says: remember the Sabbath and keep it holy; and the people, in the face of God’s law, are more busy running excursions on the Sabbath than in the middle of the week; the railroad companies and the people think it’s no harm because the civil law gives the grant, but God will bring them all in judgment to answer at his bar; for he has the “power to destroy both soul and body in hell.”

2nd. *We should have no other gods before him in offering.*—Man should remember that all things are of God and that we can do nothing without him. There are some men in this world who never allow

themselves to have time to serve God; when the voice of God calls them they have bought a piece of land and must go and see it, or have bought a yoke of oxen and must go and prove them, or must attend a secular organization of some kind,* therefore beg God to excuse them; but the Master sees that they put other gods before him, and will not hold them guiltless.

He that will not despise all for Christ, even his own life, is not worthy of him.

Again: there are some men in this world who are rich in worldly goods but have nothing to give the cause of Christ. They give freely to support fine suppers and parties, gambling halls, societies, political campaigns, and railroad excursions—all worldly sport; but when it comes to give Christ, they throw down a few pennies and say: “I give the widow’s mite.” It is as far from the widow’s mite as right is from wrong, as truth from falsehood.

“She cast in all that she had, even all her living.” God wants the largest, and not the smallest part of what we have. We are told that “Abel brought him of the firstlings of his flock,” which were accepted, while of Cain it is said only that “he brought of the fruit of the ground,” which was rejected.†

Dear brethren, when we give offerings to God, let

* Luke xiv: 18.

† Gen. iv : 3-7.

us give dollars of gold if we have them, and he will have respect to our offerings.

There is no better way of judging a man's love than by his works; for that that a man esteems he will value. "By their fruits ye shall know them." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind."

This is the first step toward God and a step which reaches to God. Show me a man that loves him as here commanded, and I will show you a man who loves no other gods and serves no other gods. Some men find it hard to serve God, because they don't love him. To serve him is natural to them that love him.

Deacon Hartshorn loves him; he gave money enough, a few years ago, to build a female College in Richmond. "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."*

3rd. *We should have no other gods before him in pleasure.*—Some people can find and see pleasure in everything but the religion of Jesus Christ. They profess to be followers of Christ, but are worldly minded, and therefore want to take part in every worldly sport, trying to serve two Masters, which is impossible.†

* 2 Cor. ix: 7.

† Luke xvi: 13.

Such persons are what we would call nominal Christians, and so very numerous are they becoming, that they are establishing their nominalism, I am sorry to say, in many of our churches. There is a sect of professing Christians nowadays that is trying to revolutionize the religion of Christ and make it better and more fashionable by adding their *little-no-harm-plays* as they call them; I call them *big-much-harm-plays*, for what is not religion is strictly against it;* such as *gambling*, “*gang base-ball sports*,” and in fact and short everything in the way of idle and vain sport that the people of the world on their march to hell tolerate; but the religion of Jesus Christ needs none of these things to make it better nor more fashionable; therefore it strongly condemns and disclaims all such in every form.†

But these hypocrites say these things add to the felicity of Christian pleasure and are therefore no harm. I contradict the assertion. The religion of Jesus Christ needs no addition for its blissfulness; it surpasses all things of the world, and surely cannot be bettered by that which is not good.

“Jesus my all to heaven is gone,
 He whom I fix my hopes upon;
 His track I see, and I’ll pursue
 The narrow way till him I view.

* Matt. xii: 30.

† 2 Cor. vi: 17.

The way the holy prophets went ;
The road that leads from banishment:
The King's high way of holiness,
I'll go, for all his paths are peace."

" Well," one says that, " we are young people and must have amusements." There is amusement enough in the religion of Jesus Christ for everybody, and is found when sought. The young need not think that they can instruct the aged about the requirements of their youthful nature; for, thank God, we have all once in our life been young, and human nature never changes; 'tis the same now as it was in ancient and apostolic days. The same grace that kept Abraham and Paul, will keep us, and the same pleasures that they found in the vineyard of God are to be had to-day, if sought prayerfully.

The first thing persons should do after becoming members of the church is to read the Bible, and there acquaint themselves more with God and his teachings, that they may better know his will. The Christians have no right to engage in idle games with the world, because, " we are the salt of the earth," and if we mix with the world in sport we will "lose our savor, and therefore be trodden under foot of men." We are commanded by our Great High Priest to let our light so shine before men, that they may see our good works and glorify our Father

which is in heaven; and how can this be done by one who participates in sin with the wicked?

He who serves the Lord, in spirit and in truth, finds all the joy he wants without running around after every idle thing. David says: "I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord," and again he says, "a day in thy courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of the wicked."

The children of God should seek no pleasures with the wicked. To serve God should be our chief glory. Though the things of the world sometimes tempt us, we should not by any means serve them, for the vain things of the world are not worthy to be compared with the riches of grace.

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."

SERMON XIX.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth : Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them : for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me ; And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.—EXODUS, xx. 4-6.

As I have already stated that the Hebrews had fallen into the transgression of idolatry with the Egyptians, it would be well to state here, that they had fastened their heart and attention on idols so very much that they thought that there was no other God; for while Moses dwelt in the Mount they called on Aaron and said: “Make us gods, which shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what has become of him:” which implies that they had lost faith, both in Moses and God. Aaron was so very weak in faith that he allowed them to persuade him to do wrong to satisfy their lust; therefore, he made them a calf.

Men who are leaders should be too firm in mind and decision to allow those who are committed to their charge to induce them to do wrong. Dear brethren, mind that you don't allow those whom you are appointed to lead, who are worldly minded, make you believe wrong is right. You should be like a stone wall, immovable; it is far better to have men think ill of you for right, that souls may be saved and righteousness upheld than have their smiles and thousands of souls lost. By Aaron yielding to the request of the children of Israel that day, and allowing them to carry him their way instead of carrying them God's way, we find that about three thousand men fell dead by the sword in one day.

God in his law aims to set the world far above idolatry, therefore he says: "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the *fathers*."

If we notice God's law aright we will find that sin, wherever found, must be and will be punished, whether in the parent or the child. Adam and Eve were not set free that Cain and Abel might suffer in their stead for their transgression, but they were

made to suffer. God did not keep them in Eden and cast out their children, but he drove them out. So we find it through all ages, God visiting the sin of all men, rich and poor, high and low, “*unto the third and fourth generation.*”

These last words of my emphasis have been often misunderstood and so represented—God does not mean to teach that he will punish children for parents’ transgressions, but rather affirms that parents are responsible for much of the transgression of their children, and therefore makes it binding upon the parents to practice righteousness that their children may walk therein. The parents by their wrong doings inculcate in the child a mean and low disposition, which is apt to reach to the fourth generation before it can be eradicated by all the power that can be found in culture. This is what God visits, not that he holds the children responsible for the parents’ sins, but that he punishes them for their own, by reason of not having refrained from it; for God plainly says: “Of them that hate me.”

When God is hated he is not loved; if the children hate God they are sure to receive his visit in wrath. But here is the joy, “*And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.*” The first thing God requires of mankind is, love supreme. Some men think to be a good moral man, keeping the moral law, is all that is required,

but not so. The worldly-wise-man led Christian to the village of morality to "Mr. Legality's house," at which place, said he, help would be found, but as Christian approached Mt. Sinai he met flames of fire. "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight."*

God wants his law obeyed, but love is pre-requisite to obedience. The command on which hangs all the rest is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment," to which all other commands are subordinate.

Obedience is the great evidence of love. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you;" and again it is said: "If a man love me, he will keep my words."

The above Scriptures show that those who love God will keep his commandments, and no man will keep them who does not love him, to whom he has promised mercy.

* Rom. iii: 20.

SERMON XX.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain ; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.—EXODUS, XX: 7.

To dishonor God is the highest crime of all human transgression. His name is too exalted, too holy, and too pure to be ever thought of without the highest regards in the reach of mortal man or holy angels: therefore his law forbids that his name should be ever used in vain.

Let us notice some of the ways in which his name may be vainly used and are here forbidden.

1st. *In irreverent thoughts.*—Man should seek to cleanse his thoughts as well as his actions; in the heart may be thoughts embodied, unuttered or expressed that may damn the soul. Job had this fear of his sons; therefore said he: “It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.”

From man our thoughts may be concealed, but with God there is nothing hid. “Behold, I know your thoughts and the devices which ye wrongfully imagine against me,” says the Lord by his servant

Job. David says: "The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man."

2nd. *In false swearing.*—God teaches us in his word that we should "love no false oath." Any man that will swear to an untruth is low in morals.

He who would take the Lord's name to affirm his false statements undervalues God in his estimate of him, and shows no regard for humanity; and God will visit all such in wrath.

Furthermore, he shows that if it were in his power he would induce God, who is the acme of perfection, to do wrong, and much less he would lead many of his fellow-men astray if intrusted to his care.

3rd. *In breaking lawful oaths.*—"Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths."

Some men care nothing for their oaths at all; they will press the Bible to their lips in the court-house, and take the witness-stand, and testify to false statements before God, and before the law. Paul says: "Men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife;" therefore men should not use God's name to confirm what they do not mean to perform, and such God will not hold guiltless.

The world to-day has in it many backsliders; persons who promised the Church to follow Christ

through floods and flames, are now standing in the open field of ruin, cursing Christ and his Church.

God will reward them, for he says: "As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head."

4th. *In open blasphemy.*—He who would use the Almighty's name dishonorably degrades humanity in a single utterance.

Now in summing up the above four statements, making a whole which constitutes a vain use of God's name, I would say that he who is guilty of this stands in the lowest regions of transgression, so to speak, for God says, "*he will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*" His name is too holy to be vainly used; he who would dare to so do will be punished either in this world or the world to come.

I will give some facts which have occurred lately, as evidence of the fact that God does disdain the vain use of his name, and punishes those who do it, committed in our own country, and written on our own press.

"At Harrisburg in Pennsylvania a company of young men led by Samuel Motter, an outrageous blasphemer, attempted mockery of the Lord's supper with bread and beer, and when they were about half through, a strange noise was heard, and look-

ing up the men saw a sight that made their blood run cold and froze the marrow in their bones. As near as the scared men could describe it, they declared it was an immense, ill-formed and foul beast with great cloven feet, painted horns, and eyes that flashed fire. With wild yells the men rushed out into the open air, and scattered in every direction.

“Finally all of them reached their homes except Motter, who was away for a long time, and at last he arrived, a maniac.

“He was put to bed and physicians summoned, but they could do nothing for him. He raved, howled, and prayed, declaring that he had seen the Evil One and that he was lost. His torture was terrible, but nothing could be done to relieve him, and he died in the wildest agony. The death-bed scene is said to have been full of horrors that can hardly be described.”—(*N. Y. World*, Feb., 1886.)

“In Cincinnati the other day Simon Wilcox surveyed the ruin of his crop, wrought by a hail-storm, began to curse God for allowing such, and vented a tirade of horrible blasphemy. In the midst of his cursing he was suddenly stricken with paralysis, and could not leave the spot. There his neighbors found him, and their story is that they could not release him; that he was surrounded by a circle of intense heat, and that when they tried to push him outside of it with a pole, the pole turned off, and that it

was not until towards evening that the mysterious heat disappeared, and he fell down, unconscious, and was picked up a raving maniac.”—(*Petersburg Index Appeal*, 1886.)

“In Steubenville Co., N. C., a farmer some days ago while cutting corn found much of it blown down by the wind; for which cause he began to blaspheme, and continued until near noon, about which time one of his employees said to him: ‘You ought not to talk that way; it is enough to make one’s blood curdle.’

“‘Let it curdle,’ retorted the farmer. ‘If Jesus Christ was here in the corn-field I’d cut him up the same way I cut this corn.’

“The man stood up erect as he spoke, and remained motionless. His companion, who was a church-going, quiet countryman, was shocked at the speech, and continued his work without paying particular attention to his employer’s movements. At the end of a few moments he turned to see why the farmer had stopped work, and he saw that he was standing erect and looked rigid and white. Receiving no answer to a question as to what was the matter, the workman approached the farmer, and found to his horror that he was dead although standing.

“There was an expression of pain in the dead man’s face, and the eyes were wild and staring. At first the workmen refused to touch the body, as they

regarded the sudden death as a judgment of an offended Deity, but some of the neighbors finally removed it to the house.”—(*Pittsburg Chronicle*, 1886.)

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.”

SERMON XXI.

CHRIST, THE LAW FULFILLING.

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets : I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.—MATT. V : 17. 18.

CHRIST here enters upon the law with a wonderful commentation. His preceding applications are wonderful and forcible. He handles the law not as a student, but rather as its author and teacher, and we need not be surprised at the disciples thinking that he meant to change the law, for his manner of unfolding its mysteries and teaching its true meaning was enough to shock the sensibility of any mortal, especially when he had been taught to think and do otherwise. His commentation has not only to do with the decalogue and the Pentateuch, but deals wonderfully as well with all the law, that was spoken through the prophets.

The text sets forth *the purpose of his coming*; for he declares that he has come to fulfill, and not to destroy. It would be well to notice, that before he asserts the purpose of his coming, he makes a

negative declaration: "Think not I am come to destroy," forbidding that one should mistake his purpose, while he sets over against it the declarative statement, "I am not come to *destroy*, but to fulfill." He did not come to destroy the law, but rather to explain it. He was its author, and consequently its rightful teacher. The decalogue said, "Thou shalt not kill," which had been interpreted by the Jews, as only forbidding highway murder and manslaughter; for they said: "whosoever shall kill, shall be in danger of the judgment," while Christ himself says: "whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment:" thus making man a murderer for his thoughts; this is the true spirit of the law.

He who would wrongfully use his brother, or work against his interest, whether it be to seek his life with a sword, or a shooting instrument, or to take away his life by neglect of some duty which, if attended to, would add greatly to his welfare, is guilty of murder in the sight of God. Moreover, the decalogue had been interpreted by the Jews as forbidding only the act of adultery, while Christ says, "whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already in his heart." This makes us responsible for our thoughts as well as our actions, and he who would think a vicious thought, or allow himself to have malicious crav-

ings, stands before God guilty. O God, cleanse thou our secret thoughts, that we may abide the day of thy coming; for if judgment begin at the house of the Lord, what shall be the end of the wicked?

Moreover, we would notice, that the law is not only to remain, but it is to remain unchanged; the same in all of its parts until fulfilled.

“Verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” This establishes the fact that it must remain the same in all of its relations, without the slightest change even in the smallest part. To take away part of the law would leave us without a perfect law, and as soon as law loses its perfection it ceases to be God’s law; for, “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.” *

Every part of God’s law is good for man, and indeed is pre-requisite to the perfecting of his nature, and to take away any part of it would be to humanity’s destruction. Every word of it is a warning against danger, for every time it is broken or disregarded, humanity suffers degradation. The law that God gave Adam in Eden was a token against danger, for he explicitly told him that, “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

* Psa. xix : 7.

Adam disregarded the law and ate, and death followed immediately. Had he kept the law he could not have died, for the violation of God's law is the only outlet from his favor. Hence we see that law serves to the human family as a school-master bringing us to Christ,* that we might be made perfect. There is no division of it; all of its parts constitute one grand whole, all of which is unalterable. Therefore it must ever remain unchanged.

Hence, let us not think that Christ came to destroy the law; for he came not to destroy, but to *fulfill*. God's law must be fulfilled just as it is given; it can neither be subverted nor repealed.

A few weeks ago President Cleveland issued a proclamation that all of the Confederate flags captured during the late civil war be returned to their former owners; but when he found that the leading demagogues of the United States rebutted his action with fiery indignation, he instantly withdrew his proclamation. It is not so with God; his word is law, and must be obeyed.

This must be done not by subversion, but by meeting its just demands. It demands nothing more than what is just and right. God did not give a law that could not be fulfilled; to do so is incompatible with his nature; and if he had done so Christ would never have attempted its fulfillment, for he became

* Gal. iii : 24.

incarnate, entering under the law to fulfill the demands of the law; meeting its penalty, not for himself but for us (for with his stripes we are healed), and if there had been any unjust demands, it is nothing more than just to suppose that he would not have met them.

The law must be fulfilled, and this he does. Man is incapable of fulfilling the law because he is but a creature and is obligated to God for service. Having by voluntary transgression fallen from God's favor, he has no claims on heaven; thus he stands before God guilty with death, which is the penalty of the law resting upon him.

“In Adam we all die.” The fulfillment of the law calls for one who is free from the law and equal in essence with God. This personage is found alone in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten son. He does not fulfill the law by subverting and adapting it to our sinful nature, but he sustains and honors the law by paying its just penalty.

The apostle says: “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law” * Thus we see that the law is not only to be fulfilled in Christ, but also in us. The law is to be fulfilled in us in the righteousness of Christ; it can never be in our sinful nature: for we, like sheep, have all gone astray.

* Rom. iii : 31.

Being sinners by nature we stand under the law, perfectly powerless to help ourselves, neither can the law deliver us from the bondage of sin and death; for the law stands out in the righteousness of God, holding up its claims of just demands for former violation.

Therefore the apostle says: "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin, in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." * Wherefore we see that Christ has made it possible for us to render the law perfect obedience, for in him, we who were dead in trespass and in sin, are all made alive.

This obedience is strictly spiritual, for we must be born again. When a soul is born of the Spirit of God, he is made spiritually minded, he loses taste for carnal things, and places his affections upon spiritual things.

The new birth so revolutionizes things, that a new nature is given, and the soul is placed in a renewed circumstance.

Then it is that old things pass away, and behold all things are become new. Therefore the apostle

* Rom. viii : 3, 4.

says: "Ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you."*

Our state is truly one of lustre and grandeur, for we could never have produced a righteousness under the law to equal that of our Redeemer.

He "bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."† "That we might be made the righteousness of God in him."‡ Now, my dear hearers, we are enabled to see plainly that it was strictly necessary that Christ should come to *fulfill the law and the prophets*.

It was necessary for him to come to fulfill the law, because there was none who could fulfill it, for he alone was free from the law and had pre-eminence over it.

It was necessary for him to fulfill the prophets, because the fulfillment of all that was said respecting redemption was pre-requisite to the accomplishment of salvation.

Now let us notice how and in what way is Christ come to fulfill the law and the prophets:

I. *He is come to fulfill the prophets*.—All that the prophets said respecting salvation would have amounted to nothing had not the Saviour made his

* Rom. viii : 2.

† 1 Pet. ii : 24.

‡ 2 Cor. v : 21.

advent into the world. The prophets spoke as they were commanded by God, and Christ was the spirit of prophecy.

He was therefore responsible for the fulfillment of all that was predicted, and had he failed to have made his appearance, the entire plan of salvation would have been of no use. Hence it was highly necessary that he should fulfill the prophets, and this he did.

His manner of fulfilling the prophets was so very perfect that there is no place for criticism. It was a fulfillment to the letter. He put in his appearance at Bethlehem, as it had been predicted by the prophets, and walked down the prophetic road, beginning with Moses, to John the Baptist, and pulled up every peg that had been staked as a sign of his coming, erased every mark that had been made as a token of his wisdom and power, and in the vindication of his majesty met manfully every evil that was perpetrated upon his kingdom by the powers of death and hell.

Do you not hear the apostle crying: "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up" ?

Yes, very distinctly. Well, he means that the Lord of heaven has come down to this dark and evil world, and that the brilliancy of his light greatly

astonishes the powers of sin and darkness, and there is none in the devil's kingdom that know him, consequently cannot understand him.

II. *He is come to fulfill the law.*—A wonderful saying. It is a declaration that is incommensurable to human intellect; our finite perception cannot fathom its depth, measure its height, nor calculate its breadth. It is fuller in meaning than mortals know.

The fulfillment of civil law is an embodiment that out-strips human intellect, much less the fulfillment of divine law.

Blackstone's Commentary upon the laws of England is indeed wonderful, but is still susceptible of addition, and therefore is incomplete.

Our Lord's commentary upon the law of God is far more wonderful, and is not susceptible to addition, for it stands complete in all of its relations, and is therefore unalterable, and must remain the same through all ages. It is the chief corner-stone to civil law, the sure foundation on which is reared the structure of all civil affairs that relate to the bettering of humanity.

He is its author, and is therefore its rightful teacher. His authorship places him pre-eminently above the law, and makes him the law's master. His incarnation was strictly voluntary upon his own part; he entered under the law to fulfill his own law, that had been broken by the voluntary transgression

of man, that he might redeem him from under its curse.

By this means it was necessary that he should serve and fulfill the law.

1st. *Civilly*.—Civil law is as much ordained of God as divine law; for God's law bespeaks the government of man in relation to his fellow-man, as well as it bespeaks his government in relation to his God.

Civil law must be obeyed, for it is ordained of God. Therefore the apostle says: "Be ye subject to the higher power." What can be said of Christ in this respect? Did he render civil law obedience? Yes, for he said: "Render therefore unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's."

He rendered perfect obedience to civil law; for there cannot be found in his whole history the violation of a single statute. He served his parents as the law demanded until it freed him.

He entered not upon his public ministry until he was thirty years of age; he therefore fulfilled civil law with an obedience that was in every way perfect.

2nd. *He fulfilled the law morally*.—Morality in man lost its perfection in the transgression of Adam—in Adam's fall all mankind fell down.

Humanity became vile in the vices of immorality. Drunkenness, theft, covetousness, lying, adultery,

and deceitfulness became the common vices of humanity, above which no man stood in perfection.

Our Lord came to thresh the mountains of transgression and destroy sin in the valley, by fulfilling in his person the moral law to perfection. He was in all points tempted, yet without sin. He stands above drunkenness, and says that, "No drunkard shall enter the kingdom of heaven." Theft meets his condemnation, for his law says: "Thou shalt not steal." He disdains covetousness, for he says: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Lying found no lodging place in his heart, for he says: "I am the way, the truth and the life." "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Adultery receives his strongest condemnation, for he says: "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Deceitfulness meets not his toleration, he rises pre-eminently above it; for he deals with sin openly, and impartially. Now I ask, what claims has the moral law upon him? I answer, none; for that which was lost in Adam, perfection, is restored in him.

The first Adam is of the earth earthy, and the second Adam is the Lord from heaven. In the first Adam we all die; in the second Adam, Jesus Christ, we all are made alive. Adam is man's representative head in sin, while Christ becomes his represen-

tative head in grace. The moral law is truly forcible and binding, for it says: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Yet in Christ it finds fulfillment to perfection; for "he went about doing good," and declared that, "the Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost."

All that was lost in Adam is regained in Christ—"Thanks be to God for this unspeakable gift."

3rd. *He fulfilled the law prophetically.*—God's prophetic law was not fulfilled when he called Malachi down from the prophetic wall. The prophetic day was only suspended, awaiting the advent of Jesus Christ.

There were many things to be spoken of respecting the future of his church that had not been revealed to any of the prophets; in fact, the prophecies were not concluded until John was commanded to write no more, and the book of Revelation sealed.

But these things we do not purpose to deal with in the development of this thought. What demands our attention mainly, as to what Christ fulfilled, are those things which were predicted about him in relation to the accomplishment of salvation, for every word that was spoken by the prophets about him, was a law to be fulfilled.

He fulfilled the prophecies relating to his *birth*. The thing that demands our attention first in this thought is his ancestry. Prophetically, he had been

restricted to a certain family. After God had tested Abraham's faith in the offering of his son, Isaac, he told him that in his seed all nations of the earth should be blessed,* thus restricting the parental descent of our Saviour to the lineage of Abraham, and as time moved on this promise was renewed, down the whole line of Abraham's posterity to the Saviour's coming. God's blessings rested upon Isaac as the remembrance of his promise, and in Jacob the covenant was renewed, and so on down to David, to whom God spoke and said: "Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne."

Then we plainly see that the parental descent of our Saviour was the first prophetic truth to be fulfilled in him. Had he come of any other lineage save that of Abraham of the loins of David, it would have caused a broken link in the whole chain of prophecies that had been uttered respecting him.

This of itself would have destroyed the merit or worth of salvation: hence we plainly see that it was strictly necessary that the law here should be fulfilled.

That Christ did spring from the loins of David, the seed of Abraham, is an indisputable fact, for in the first chapter of Luke and the 26th verse we read that the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee named Nazareth to a virgin espoused to a

* Gen. xxii : 18.

man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. This fact is one of the strongest proofs of his Messiahship.

The time of his coming: Christ did not only fulfill the predictions of the prophets in relation to his parental descent, but the time of his coming as well.

The time of his coming is marked in these words of Daniel: "Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after three score and two weeks shall the Messiah be cut off, but not for himself." *

The best theologians agree that in the weeks mentioned here every day represents a year, and this time expired in the four thousandth (4,000) year of the world, at which time the Saviour made his appearance.

Ezra elucidates the mystery when he says: "They builded, and finished it, according to the commandment of the God of Israel." † It had been predicted by Haggai that the Lord would fill the second temple with glory, in the person of the Desire of all nations, ‡

* Dan. ix: 25, 26.

† Ezra vi: 14.

‡ Hag. ii: 7.

which was fulfilled when our Lord appeared in the temple in Jerusalem.

Furthermore, in his coming, the prophecies relating to his *birth-place* were fulfilled. His birth-place was marked in these words spoken by Micah: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."*

This was fulfilled when Christ was born, to which the angel of the Lord appeared as witness when he said unto the shepherds: "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." †

4th. *He fulfilled the law sacrificially.*—"Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." ‡ "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world." § "Him hath God the Father sealed." §

"Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission." ||

In view of the above passages of Scripture can it be said that Christ did not come to fulfill the law sacri-

* Mic. v: 2.

† Luke ii: 10, 11.

‡ Zech. xiii: 7.

§ Jno. i: 29; vi: 27.

|| Heb. ix: 22.

ficially? No! no! for in the absence of this there could have been no fulfillment.

Man by voluntary transgression had broken the law. and there could be no propitiation without the shedding of the blood of our dear Redeemer. The blood of beasts would not do.

“ Not all the blood of beasts,
 On Jewish altars slain,
 Could give the guilty conscience peace,
 Or wash away the stain.

“ But Christ, the heavenly Lamb,
 Takes all our sins away,—
 A sacrifice of nobler name,
 And richer blood than they.’

Nothing but the blood of Christ can avail; sin is too deep to be otherwise eradicated. Therefore our Saviour must go, as it is written of him:

He alone can bear the load,
 He alone can for sin atone.

The anguish of Gethsemane he must bear; the scorn of wicked men he must endure, and more than this, he must walk to Calvary’s rugged brow and there a Lamb for sin be slain.

In Gethsemane he cries: “ My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death.” At Pilate’s bar he cries: “ My kingdom is not of this world.” Upon the cross he cries: “ My God, my God, why hast

thou forsaken me?" "I yield, I yield,"—he gives up the ghost and the law is fulfilled.

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets, I am not come to destroy, but fulfill." He was led as a lamb to be slaughtered, and as a sheep is dumb before the shearers, so he opened not his mouth.

He died the just for the unjust
That we, poor sinners, might have rest;
The claims of the law he fully met
And opened the door that had been shut.

SERMON XXII.

GOD WRESTLING WITH THE SINNER.

And Jacob was left alone ; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.—GEN. XXXII: 24.

JACOB'S contest here with the angel of the covenant represents the severe struggling process through which a soul passes in regeneration.

Jacob at Bethel was convinced of God's power, but he had never been convinced of his own weakness and dependence.

Therefore God met him on this side, so to speak, of Jabbok, when alone by himself, and contended with him in a wrestling combat of a three-fold nature, physical, mental, and spiritual, until he became fully conscious of his own weakness and sought divine aid; then he blessed him and departed.

I. *The soul that seeks the grace of God acceptably, must be truly conscious of his physical weakness.*

There is no combat in which two men can engage that will more thoroughly test their physical strength than wrestling; it exerts every joint and strains every nerve.

No strong man can be conscious of his deficiency until he comes in contact with and is overcome by one mightier than himself.

When the strongest of men come in contact with God, they find more than a match. In physical strength God is incomparable.

There is none like unto him, for he rideth upon the heavens in the excellency of the sky

Look out upon the mighty works of creation, and they all say there is none like unto him in strength.

The Holy Bible tells us that in six days God made the world, and all things therein, and what mighty power he must have !

What is the poor sinner in the hands of such a God? This is what the sinner must consider and know—he must not only know that God is strong, but he must also know that he himself is weak.

God is wrestling with every sinner that he may know his weakness. He causes some men's business to fail that they may know their weakness,—he sends death, and takes away their relations, that they may know their weakness,—he brings them down in afflictions, that they may know their weakness,—he takes from them their property, that they may know their weakness,—he sends upon nations earthquakes and pestilences, that they may know their weakness,—just as he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, he touches the hollow of nations

and individuals, that they may know their weakness.

II. *The sinner must not only be convinced of his weakness, but he must be fully conscious as well of his ignorance.*

He must know that God has all wisdom as well as all power, and that he is ignorant as well as weak. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are ways of death." This is the sinner's way of ignorance which he must know before he can see God's way of wisdom, which is life eternal.

Jacob thought that he was wise, for very successful had he been in dealing with his fellow-man; but with all of his craftiness, he could map out no way to appease the wrath of Esau, his brother.

Therefore he would commit his way unto the Lord. God wrestles with men in wisdom that they may know their ignorance—he allows men to be disappointed in their expectation of future success and happiness in earthly things, that they may know their ignorance,—he holds in reserve and obscurity the mysteries of the scientific world, that men may know their ignorance,—he allows nations in civil affairs to lay plans that overturn and destroy their government, that they may know their ignorance,—he allows churches to be disappointed in trying to succeed with his appointed leaders, that men

may know their ignorance,—just as he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh and left it out of joint, so does he touch the mental and literary thigh of nations and individuals and leaves them limping, that they may know their ignorance.

III. *The sinner is not only weak and ignorant, but he is sinful and wicked*, and this he must fully recognize before the blessing is given or imparted. God is not only powerful and wise, but he is righteous as well, the very acme of perfection; and this the sinner must know, and not only this, but he must know that he is sinful, and that all of his righteousness in the sight of God is but filthy rags. This he must know and truly acknowledge.

Like Jacob of old he must acknowledge: "I am not worthy of the least of all thy mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shown unto thy servant." As Jacob prayed for deliverance from the hands of Esau, so must the sinner pray for deliverance from the jaws of death.

There are some people who believe that they are very good morally, consequently they don't need much of a change to be saved; such persons are in grave error.

The best of mortals is but a wretched sinner in the sight of God and heaven. Abraham, with all of his faithfulness, when standing in the presence of the Lord, saw and acknowledged that he was but dust

and ashes. David, with all of his devoutness, could but say: "In sin did my mother conceive me." When Paul the great apostle saw himself after the flesh, he cried out: "Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" God wrestles with men in righteousness, that they may know their wickedness.

He weighs their souls in the balances of justice that they may know that they are but wretched sinners. As Belshazzar was weighed in the balance and found wanting, so is every man in his own righteousness. The sinner must see himself sinking by his own righteousness, and then he seeks to rise in the righteousness of God.

"Jesus I come to thee,
A sinner doomed to die;
My only refuge is thy cross,
Here at thy feet I lie."

When this comes to pass the sinner cries: "Lord save me or I perish." God *contends* long with men that they may be *saved*. "The angel wrestled with Jacob until the breaking of the day;" and at last he could not prevail until he touched the hollow of his thigh, and threw it out of joint.

I don't care how good one may be morally, he cannot be regenerated until his thigh is broken, and he is lame in all his ways, and powerless in all his might. Then, and not until then, can he be made

strong in God, and wise unto salvation. And before this can be done, all transgressions must be acknowledged.

Before the angel blessed Jacob he asked him his name, and he told him "Jacob," which means supplanter.

The sinner tries to supplant God; he strives to deceive him, and this he must acknowledge before God will change his name.

God gave Jacob a new name, Israel, prince with God. Then he blessed him. This is the great reformation that is wrought by regeneration. Every one that is born of God is a new creature. Jacob was left alone. We are alone when God finds us. The broken thigh was not the blessing, and be sure that you don't mistake the broken thigh for the blessing.

God breaks some men's thighs that they may know that he is God, and does not bless them because they don't seek it.

Jacob sought the blessing with his broken thigh; for the angel asked him to let him go after he broke his thigh, and it was then that Jacob said, I will not let thee go except thou bless me. Some people think that because they have hardships they will be saved.

We are not by hardships saved, but "by the grace of God." Men may have warfares and go to hell just the same if they don't believe in God and accept Jesus Christ as the Saviour of the world.

Jacob was left alone, and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day—I will not let thee go except thou bless me—My name is Jacob—and he blessed him there. Thy name shall be called no more Jacob but Israel.

SERMON XXIII.

TRANSGRESSION ACKNOWLEDGED AND SIN FORGIVEN.

I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.—PSALMS LI. 3.

DAVID was the greatest of all the kings of Israel. He changed the Hebrew history from love of personal independence and tribal jealousies to a high standard of Christian fidelity. He established the dynasty which continued to reign at Jerusalem until the Babylonian captivity, and subdued his enemies and raised his country to the highest state of prosperity and glory. In him we find the noblest elements of Hebrew genius. He possessed those qualities which made him truly a spiritual as well as a national hero of true patriotism and piety, which enabled him to shape at Jerusalem a kingdom which represented the highest conception of national life.

The greatness of his character is seen mainly in his humility. So meek and humble was he that, with all his glory and greatness, he acknowledged his transgressions.

David was not an infidel; not the slightest shadow

of an infidel spirit is seen in his whole life or character. He was a firm believer in the God of heaven; such leaders are wanted to-day. The best way to lead the people is to lead them heavenward.

I. *Man is sinful.*—The fall of Adam deeply and sadly affected humanity; it was surely a mighty fall. Julius Cæsar fell in the senate-chamber at Rome, but carried none other with him. Garfield fell on the street in Washington, but the American citizens to-day feel no effects of his death. But the fall of Adam dragged down all mankind.

Oh, what a fall was felt in Adam,
When you and all of us fell down !

The death of Adam is felt in every vein of the human system. It brought us into a state of shame and disgrace. Man is counted nothing more than filthy rags before God; he is the most sinful creature of all creation. He is walled around and hedged in by sin, so when he would do good evil is present. Carnal-mindedness is a bar across his road which can only be broken down by faith in God. Sin makes him groan; he has to fight the flesh on one hand and the devil on the other.

“O wretched man that I am ! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?” “The law is spiritual but I am carnal, sold under sin.” “How to perform that which is good, I find not.” “The

evil which I would not, that I do.”* We are sinful, but thanks be to God who gave Jesus Christ the righteous who knew no sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

II. *It is wisdom for man to acknowledge his transgression and have his sin forgiven.*

Blessed is the man who will confess his sin. Confession is the outgrowth of meekness, to which God always has respect. “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy,” says Solomon. Confessing is pouring out the evils of a depraved heart upon the ground, and the manifestation of a willingness to forsake them: while non-confession is stretching the heart to receive wickedness and showing a desire to cling to the evil way. The father loves the child that will always confess his wrong, but dislikes the one that tries to hide his sin; so with God: he who stands and gathers around him the mantle of self-righteousness and for stoutness of heart will not confess his wrongs, dwells under the law which gives sin its damning power, while he who acknowledges, “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil,”† is sheltered by his love and brought under grace.

“Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The

* Rom. vii.

† Psalm li: 4.

Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.”* The fact in the case is, the Pharisee was as great a sinner as the publican, but would not acknowledge it, therefore was not forgiven. When the Israelites wandered away in shameful idolatry God was provoked to cast them off, and he declared through the prophet Hosea that he would not restore unto them his mercies until they acknowledged their offense, and sought his face. John says, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” If the sinner would but confess his sin today he can be forgiven. There are some people who say they have been seeking the Lord many years and cannot find him; the reason is, they have never confessed that they are sinners. Oh, confess your transgressions and have your sins forgiven! Like

* Luke xviii : 10-14.

the prodigal son who strayed from his father, and on his return said, "I am no more worthy to be called thy son, make me as one of the hired servants."

Confession leads to repentance—with the mouth confession is made unto salvation; he who knows enough about his sins to confess them dislikes them enough to repent of them.

Show me a man who will confess his wrongs and I will show you one that will repent his wrongs.

"Oh that I knew the secret place
Where I might find my God!
I'd spread my wants before his face,
And pour my woes abroad."

III. *Our sin is ever before us.*—Confession enables us to see more fully the magnitude of our transgression. It opens the door of our evil hearts, and we are made to see our sins, which are standing as monuments before us. Sin may stand before man and he may not see it, because he has not been conscious of it. Take the thief who has been stealing all his life, he feels no fear and fears no danger until the law overtakes him; then he can easily see where his first act of theft was a step made downward: his sins are then brought before him, and in shame and disgrace he stands; and as long as he lives his sin is before him. Ask the man who has been in penitentiary thirty or forty years for what was he there sent, and he can tell you not only the

identical crime that sent him there, but the very first offense which he committed against the law. I believe that men's sins will follow them so in hell, for Abraham told the rich man in hell, "Remember," which shows that he was capable of knowing the things which had been done in this world. When Cain slew his brother Abel, he felt no fear until he was overtaken by the voice of God, which told him that the shedded blood of his brother was crying from the ground against him. Then he saw his sin and said, "My punishment is greater than I can bear." God told him that sin lie at the door, and when he saw it, it was like a great mountain that could not be removed.

Sin is soul-rending and heart-breaking, and there is only one who can eradicate it, and that is Jesus the just. He bore our sins in his body on a tree that we might be set free, but he will only bear or put them away when we cast them upon him through repentance. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."* The sinner weeps because of his sins; Jesus forgives him and his sins are put away, and he is ever made whole.

"Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." Sin is a hard slave-master, but he whom the Son sets free is free indeed.

* Psalm li: 16.

SERMON XXIV.

OUR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THROUGH CHRIST.

Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?—JOHN XIV: 9.

To say that Jesus was human is to say a very little about him, and to know him as a human being is to know nothing about him. He is a true representative of God—in fact his advent was the manifestation of God in the flesh, and however much we may know of his work, unless we so regard him we know nothing of him.

This being true, to know Jesus is to know God. This knowledge comes from a spiritual standpoint and not a temporal one. This was Philip's mistake; he had gazed upon the incarnate God, in whom dwelt the fullness of the God-head,* with a temporal eye, and therefore his three years' schooling at the feet of Jesus were about to pass away, leaving him with a very imperfect knowledge of the God he loved and served.

* Col. ii: 9.

So with many to-day who are professed Christians; they have undoubtedly been followers of Christ for a number of years and know but little or nothing of him.

This assertion awakes our minds to great surprise; likely every Christian in the house wonders to himself :

“Have I been lo these many years trying to follow Jesus, and yet know him not ?” If this be the inquiry that fills the heart there is another that immediately follows, namely: “How shall I learn of him or perfect my knowledge of him ?” I answer:

I. *In Spirit*.—“God is a Spirit : and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.” *

If we desire to know much of any branch of science we should acquaint ourselves with the subject of which we desire to know something. If we wish to know something of mathematics we must put ourselves down to the study of mathematics.

Suppose you desired to have a knowledge of geology, would you throw yourself down to the study of the Code of Virginia ? I guess not; to do so would be the height of folly. Again: If you desire to know the nature of a thing or the process by which a thing is performed, throw yourself into the existing attitude of its performance and you will be able

* Jno. iv: 24.

to better judge it and will quicker learn to be in sympathy with the action. No man can tell how hard it is to do hard work who has not done hard work. No one who has not endured hard trials can tell what it is to withstand hard trials.

Well, then, if our God be a Spirit and moves in the spirit, we must be in the spirit to know him aright; and, dear brethren, unless we seek him, in the spirit, we will not find him.

Men who look in temporal things for God will never know much of him.

Ministers who are always hunting the fields of science aside from the Holy Bible in search for God know but little about him. The church-members who follow up the devices of this world, who think the prayer-meeting to be no place for them, never know much of God, and the sinner who looks for signs and wonders as a token of his religion will never find God.

Oh! seek the Lord our God in the spirit with nothing doubting, and you are sure to find him. I remember once an aged lady came in contact with a young school-teacher who was recreating himself in a game of cards; both were Christians. She said to the young man, "Why do you serve the devil so when you have promised to serve God?" "If you can see any wrong in this, madame, you can see more than I can," replied the young man.

“Well,” said she, “Jesus says, ‘He that is not for me is against me,’ and all that is not right is surely wrong.” This old lady knew more of God than the learned scholar, because she had walked with God in the spirit, while he had walked after him in the letter.

II. *In Love*.—Supreme love to God is the pillar on which the saint is securely seated when the devil sends out the last host of hell against him. Love is a foundation too firm to be shaken by tribulations, and a chord too strong to be broken by the devil.

“God is love,” and he who would know him must love. “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” And he who would know God must love God well enough to put down his life for his cause. Ambition governs civil affairs, while love governs divine affairs. The warrior of the battle-field lays down his life because there is a great name to be won, while Jesus laid down his life for us because he loved us and desired to save us, thus showing himself the fountain-head of love; and he who would know him must love. Oh! brethren, do you love the Lord?

If so your love must be fruitful, and where is the fruit? “If you love me, you will keep my sayings,” says Christ. Where is the man who says that he loves the Lord, and then goes on in the way of

wrong? He hears his God saying: "Thou shalt not steal," but he continues to steal; "Thou shalt not commit adultery," but he goes on committing adultery; "Thou shalt not bear false witness," but he goes on lying. Where is your love for God? Moreover we must love our neighbors as ourselves: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "He who says he loves God whom he has not seen and hates his brother whom he has seen is a liar, and the truth is not in him," says the apostle.

"Who is on the Lord's side?" None but those who love him. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind," is the first commandment, and thy neighbor as thyself, is the second.

Then to know God is to know him through love; he loved us and we must love him. "Greater love has no man than this, to lay down his life for his friend." In this Christ Jesus has shown himself to be greater than man, for he laid down his life for us while we were yet sinners. Now let us lay our lives down, if needs be, for his cause.

III. *Through meekness.*—It is the meek soul that is enabled to know of God. John rested too near the Saviour's bosom to ask Philip's question. It was Mary that chose the good part: because she sat at the feet of Jesus and learned of him. It is the meek saint that sits at the feet of Jesus, and the

proud Christian or church member who sits in front of him or by his side.

The meek saint will take his seat anywhere in God's house, while the proud member must have the highest seat in the synagogue or none.

It is the meek saint who is always in the prayer-meeting, while the proud member thinks it beneath his dignity.

The meek saint, like Elijah of old, whenever God calls to duty, is ready to answer, "Here am I;" while the proud member waits to know whether he intends to make him a priest in the temple or a door-keeper at the door.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." It was the meekness of Peter that made him bear his Lord's rebukes in love while the proudness of Judas made him a traitor.

The meek soul learns of God through suffering: he stoops beneath the cross and takes it up denying himself and follows Jesus through evil reports as well as good; he knows a great deal of the Lord's suffering and much of his loving grace. Simon of Cyrene knew more of our Lord's suffering than the many hundreds put together who cried "Crucify him," because he went under the cross and helped to bear its weight.

Oh! that we were meek cross-bearers of our dear Redeemer.

In conclusion, my dear Christian friends, allow me to say that to be acquainted with Christ is to know God, and to know not Christ is to have no knowledge of God.

Now what is it to know Christ and who may know him? It is a glorious thing to know Christ, for to know him is to know God, whom to know is life eternal. No knowledge is like that knowledge that cometh down from the Father of lights, for in the person of Jesus Christ is revealed the fullness of the Godhead, and there is none that know God except those who know him through the Son.

“I am in the Father and the Father in me, and he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.”

Who are they who may sit at the feet of him who is the fountain-head of all knowledge and learn of him? Any who are of a meek and lowly mind, any who will accept the plan of salvation and deny himself and take up the cross and follow him.

While Plato would call his disciples from among the great and rich, Jesus will call his from among the poor and needy.

While Aristotle would call the proud and noble, our Lord calls the meek and lowly, and says, take my yoke upon you for it is easy.

A student on entering college must have the literary ability to pass certain examinations or he will be turned away irrespective of his good character.

But Jesus says, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out," "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink." Come without money or without price. What the Lord requires is a willingness on the part of the sinner to accept him and learn of him. However ignorant you may be you may have a knowledge of God through Jesus Christ. Dear Christian friends, let us learn more of Jesus and less of the world; let us sit daily at his feet and learn of him.

We will not perfect our knowledge in this life, but thanks be to God in the life which is to come "we shall know even as we are known."

SERMON XXV.

INTERCESSION FOR TRANSGRESSORS.

Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.—
LUKE XXIII: 34.

AN intercessor is one who intercedes for another. Our Lord, unlike man, shows a deep sympathetic feeling for those who stained their hands in his blood.

Human perception cannot estimate the goodness here shown humanity by a kind Saviour, who had power to destroy as well as to defend. He regards not his own pain and makes intercession for transgressors.

I. *He intercedes for his enemies.*—The most heart-rending thing of life is to see the innocent suffer for the guilty; and it is truly the greatest heart of love that can look from under the cross of suffering, and beg for his persecutors to be pardoned of the crime of putting to death himself who had never sinned. Our Lord in this proves himself divine, for he does what none other would do.

Father forgive them, he cries, while his body was being stretched out upon the cross, and nails being

driven through his feet and hands ; pain, the greatest of all pain, seized his mortal frame, while mockers scorned him and said all manner of evil against him, yet, seeing them sinking in despair, he had compassion on them. Knowing that there was none other to intercede for them, he forgets his own suffering, thinking of their future danger, and feels willing to forget his past hardships, and not think once of his present trials, and prays his Father to forgive them, while the angelic hosts of heaven stood in readiness to smite the earth and destroy the world in his defense. Jesus Christ, the dying Saviour, stretches out his hand and holds up the wrath of God, and shelters the heads of the guilty men, and prays that they might be spared.

He “made intercession for transgressors,” says Isaiah; this he did by pouring out his own soul unto death.

Forgive them: All who have labored to make me suffer, both Jew and Gentile, Father forgive them. Before this he had prayed for his disciples to be kept, now he prays for his enemies to be pardoned; the first are his friends and the second his enemies, who had their hands and garments stained with his blood. In this he steps a little beyond human power and shows his ability to give good for evil. It is not a hard thing to pray for our friends, but it is to pray for our enemies. “Who is he that condemn-

eth? It is Christ that died," for us who are sinners, violators of God's law, "who also maketh intercession for us." Sinners, he maketh intercession for you, to-day his enemies, that you may have a right to the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

Paul says: "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

II. *Sinners are not conscious of the enormity of their crime.*

Wicked men seem to fear civil law more than the divine law. Christ saw that the world was making this great mistake when he said, "Fear not man who can only destroy the body, but fear God who has the power to destroy the body and cast the soul into hell." The Jews thought it a great sin for Pilate not to respect the rights of Cæsar, but no sin to disrespect the rights of God; they could not see where our Lord had any rights at all that they or Pilate should respect, but they could see wherein he and they were bound to respect the rights of Cæsar. So it is with men to-day—they obey man rather than God. Men and brethren, this should not be so. There is a law of right revealed by conscience which recognizes obligation to our God, and to disobey God is to disobey the eternal Judge, not man. Man is our fellow-servant, while God is

our Creator. There is a statute in the civil laws of this country that says, if a man maliciously take another's life he shall be hanged. If death is a just penalty for taking the life of your fellow-man, what can be the just penalty for taking the life of the Prince of peace? It is death to the soul. In one it is death to the body, while in the other it is death to the soul

Now, sinners, which is of the more importance, the soul or the body?

The soul. Well, which is the greater crime—to violate, civil or divine law? “The day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,” said God to Adam.

True it was, the day he questioned God's veracity by believing the devil's lie, was the day he died spiritually a death which corrupted the whole fountain of human life. The human family numbering millions and billions of coming offspring was cut off from God to sink in despair.

This is what it is to violate God's law; this is what it is to turn your heels against God; this is what it is to crucify the Son of God—eternal death. This his enemies, as they chanted around his bloody cross crying, “Crucify him,” seem not to have known, because they thought he was not the Son of God.

Sinners, your crime is more great than theirs, be-

cause you know him to be the promised Messiah of whom the prophets spoke; you know that he is the universal acknowledged Saviour, and knowing this increases your crime; but if you will only accept salvation, God will forgive you while Jesus prays. “Your crime though great cannot surpass the power and glory of his love.”

III. *God forgives sin.*—Jesus Christ as mediator has not the power to forgive sin, but he has the power to induce God the Father, who can forgive; because he who sins, sins against God. Jesus Christ, the second person of the Trinity, became incarnate to take the place of sinners under the law and suffered in their stead. By this he overruled the power of death and assumed the office of mediator. Now he stands between God and man, and makes intercession for man, that he may have peace with his God.

Now it is for man to seek, Jesus to intercede and God to forgive. The wicked in crucifying Christ do not simply sin against Christ, but they make an outrage on heaven or the Trinity; therefore it does not rest in the power of Christ to forgive, but the first person of the Trinity is therein concerned. God being the law-giver it is his law that has been violated; he stands up for his claims that must be met, and it takes one equal with him in essence to stand up for sinful man who is doomed to death. Guiteau in assassinating President Garfield did not sin

against Garfield, but committed an outrage against the United States; it was not Garfield's law violated, but the law of the United States. To forgive was not Garfield's to do, but the United States at the plea of another, his (Guiteau's) counsel. So in the government of God; there is none to forgive but him.

Sinners cannot enter heaven against God's will; they must be at peace with God. This our Lord had in view while his human nature (not his Divinity) suffered under the hands of transgressors; he saw their garments stained with his dying blood, and knew that with God they had no power; that he was the only one that could reach the eternal Mind, and if he failed to plead for them, they would be held in despair; therefore he cries: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Dear brethren, it was nothing but this prayer that held back God's wrath, for I fancy that to see Jesus, God's only Son, suffer and die was the greatest pain that ever crossed the bosom of the eternal Mind. It is the humble plea of Jesus that keeps sinners alive to-day; while Justice would cut them down, Mercy pleads their cause.

To be *pardoned by God* is the greatest favor ever granted human beings. Oh! just think of the Father looking at the Son with a smile and the Son looking at the sinner and redeeming his soul from hell.

The action is so magnanimous that even angels around God's throne in heaven rejoice: It is so great that every blood-washed soul wonders to himself how it was that such a guilty sinner as he could have ever become reconciled to God.

“ While all our hearts and every song,
Join to admire the feast,
Each of us cries, with thankful tongue,
Lord, why was I a guest? ”

While we stand in wonder the poet gives answer·

“ ’Twas the same love that spread the feast,
That sweetly forced us in;
Else we had still refused to taste,
And perished in our sins. ”

SERMON XXVI.

FAITH.

Have faith in God.—MARK XI: 22.

OUR Saviour walking along the public road one day, saw a fig-tree standing with fresh and uplifted leaves which shewed forth the appearance of hanging fruit. Being hungry he drew near, expecting to find something to eat, but when he approached it he found nothing but leaves. In this the tree acted the part of a deceiver, for which action the Saviour cursed it, thus showing himself Lord over the inanimate as well as the animate kingdom. When he came back that way his disciples found the tree dried up from the roots, which took them so very much by surprise that Peter called the Saviour's attention to it—"Behold the fig-tree which thou cursed is withered away "

From their surprise it seems that they thought it to be an impossibility for the Saviour's words to have such power as to perform so great a miracle. Therefore our Lord in the simple words of the text tells them by what means this had been done, by

having faith in his Father, for he goes on to tell them that with faith they might be able to do a greater thing: "For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith." *

All the miracles that Christ and his disciples performed were based on faith, and were attended by both miraculous and supernatural power, and if we look for its attestation we need only to look upon them.

We need no definition for faith, for it is so simple that its mystery, if it has any at all, dwells in its simplicity. All persons know it and exercise it, even down to little children.

The child will ask his mother for bread when hungry, because he believes that his mother will give him bread.

There is a secular faith and there is a spiritual faith. One I would call dead faith, and the other living or saving faith.

Faith is the same in all of its forms or relations. It exerts a powerful influence over human destiny. Man acts according to his faith and lays his plans for future ends on his faith; on whatever he deter-

* Verse 23.

mines his faith, there is his glory and fixed destiny. If he believes in the works of darkness he remains in the congregation of the dead, while if he believes in Jesus Christ he will have everlasting life.

If we look at faith in its broadest sense, we can only say that it consists in confidence given to testimony. The confidence may, however, be based on a false statement, and thus cause a false faith, but this has no effect upon the thing on which the statement is based. A man may be right and the public may believe him to be wrong, but their belief does not make him wrong; or a man may be wrong and every body may believe him to be right, but their belief does not make him right. If all the world believed the devil to be righteous, that would not make him righteous—he would be the devil, still; and if all the world disbelieved in the existence of God, it would not in the least degree affect his existence. He is God from everlasting to everlasting. When Lucifer, the angel of light, fell, God was not the slightest affected, and if all of heaven were to disbelieve in him he would still be God.

Infidel clamors have no sway on the existence of God, they touch not even the hem of his garments, so to speak. *Faith and knowledge* work together, but faith may reach beyond knowledge; man cannot believe in that of which he has no knowledge.

The illiterate employee stands beside his learned

employer and sees him work his figures, while he counts his fingers. Why does he count his fingers? because he knows not figures and therefore has no faith in them.

Paul, when at sea in a storm, a prisoner for Rome, feared no danger, while the captain with his crew trembled in fear. Paul knew God and therefore had faith in him, while those wicked men had no knowledge of him and therefore had no faith. The man who knows not God has no faith in God. Faith abides solely in confidence; in the absence of confidence there is and can be no faith; and no man knows God but to have confidence in him, for he has never yet deceived. Now we will notice that faith reaches beyond knowledge.

The teacher before his class may, after hearing the student recite one paragraph, be impressed to believe that he knows the whole of his lesson; he only knows, in fact, that he knows what he has heard him recite, but he assumes that he knows and marks him maximum; in this his faith reaches beyond his knowledge. So with the seeking soul, he learns a little about God; just enough to know that he is just, upright, perfect, merciful; and here he hangs himself in faith.

Above I have stated that there is a *dead and a living* faith, and here we want to fasten our attention for a few moments in commentation. I desire to

treat faith here under two general heads: animate and inanimate.

I. *Inanimate*.—This I desire to divide into two parts.

1st. *Faith of reluctance*.—I might receive intelligence respecting my mother's death; the source from which I received it may be so very reliable that I could not doubt its truth, and yet I would hang my head and wash my face in tears; there is no life in such faith, there is more death.

Ask the perishing sinner if he believes that there is a just God, who has no fellowship with sin and will punish the wicked in hell? and he will tell you yes, much to his regret; he trembles when he thinks of a just God. The great calamities of railroads, steamboats, and fire-destruction to the loss of hundreds and thousands of lives, of which we hear most every day, we believe with much regret.

2nd. *Faith of indifference*.—Some man may tell me that the king of Hayti is six feet high and I may believe it, but what do I care about whether he is five, six, or seven feet high? I believe it, but in such faith there is no life. Some men will readily admit or believe any and everything, but care for and will stand by nothing. Some men read the Bible and believe it, but care nothing about it; such men are bad men, they dwell in gross darkness.

II. *Animate or living faith*.—We thank God for

the living faith This faith works from the bottom of the heart, and it would be well to say just here that the heart is the theatre of the operation of all faith. The heart is the seat of affection and the pivot on which turns man's every-day action, whether secular or religious. The weak may have as much faith as the strong: when the heart wills, the mind exercises, no muscular force or power is brought to action; it is absolutely the will of the heart and assent of the mind. The man who cannot raise fifty pounds of solid weight can have as much faith as Samson could have had, who pulled down the great temple. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Man believes in God with the same heart that he believes secular things, the very same set of faculties is employed for operation; the only difference is, that faith in God renews the heart and the believer then calls it a new heart.

1st. The first thing we notice about this living faith is, that *it leads to conviction*. A knowledge of God gives man a knowledge of himself, by which he sees that he is corrupt and all defiled with sin. Then he cries out: "O! wretched man that I am." Some people will ask, why do the seekers weep so? Dear brethren, I never, in all of my life, saw a storm at sea, but what the billows were rolling high and bursting themselves against the sand-bars; neither have I ever seen a soul born of the Spirit of

God but that he had been greatly tossed on the ocean of grief.

2nd. *It prompts action.*—“Take up thy bed and walk,” is the command that comes to every believing soul. “Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works,” says the apostle. Living faith is a faith full of action, strong faith great work, weak faith little work. Faith is susceptible to *increase and decrease*. It may be decreased by both bad treatment and disappointment. The parent may use the child so very badly by rebuke that at last he loses all confidence in the parent; or a student may so often find himself disappointed in getting some information from his teacher, that he is led to believe that the teacher is deficient and his faith in him falls to the ground. But a believer in God never finds this to be his case, for God in all things is affectionate, and he who looketh for wisdom let him come unto him.

Faith may be increased by both encouragement and trial. All the afflictions that God puts upon his children are only to try their faith and always tend directly thereto, for behind the frowning providence we see a smiling face.

“ His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour;
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower.”

There is an encouragement behind every trial. When the saints are wading through the deep waters of tribulations that almost cover our heads to the shedding of blood, we hear the Master speaking from above saying: "He that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life which is in the midst of the paradise of God," and being lost in the sea of joy we forget our troubles and march forward with fresh courage.

III. *The power of faith.*—Faith governs the world both temporally and spiritually, but I desire to-night, brethren, to notice just a few minutes its spiritual sway.

Faith is a cord extending out from God, on which if we will fasten our hold with all our mind, soul, and strength we can draw him down from the heavens to our assistance at whose coming the earth shakes and trembles, and Satan is put to flight. It was by it that Queen Esther approached the king in the behalf of her people, and rescued over seventy-five thousand Jews from the edge of the sword. It was by it that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came forth out of the fiery furnace with not even the smell of fire on their garments. It was by it that Paul and Silas were loosed from prison, and thanks be to God, it is by it that we are redeemed from the powers of sin and death.

Living faith is a living power, and he who has

faith in God has power with God, and one man with faith in God can do more than all the world can without faith in him. Elijah stood alone on Mt. Carmel, and overruled all the powers of darkness by having faith in God.

“ Faith is a living power from heaven,
Which grasps the promise God has given;
A trust that cannot be o’erthrown
Securely fixed on Christ alone.”

SERMON XXVII.

SIN AND ITS ELEMENTS.

My punishment is greater than I can bear.—GENESIS IV:
13.

To seduce Adam to transgression did not satisfy Satan's inclination to work among the human family, but we find him striving in Adam's posterity to overcome and destroy

He could not succeed with Abel but he did with Cain. That same weakness that caused Adam to question God's veracity by having faith in the devil is found in the members of Cain, which led him to dishonor his Maker by offering up to him an unworthy sacrifice which was rejected.

I. *Sin is demoralizing.*—Adam was all right with God until he committed sin; then he was so corrupted that God his creator turned his back on him. No longer could he be the glory of the garden or the man of God's favor. Justice demanded his leaving the vineyard which had been made for his comfort and delight.

So with Cain, his heart was black and his soul unclean; and when he came to God holding up to his

gaze the pitiful offering of his filthy soul there was no respect paid to it, and he was therefore made to wander away with a grieved conscience.

So with every one that becomes tainted with the black substance called sin; "Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind and conscience defiled." Adam's transgression corrupted the whole fountain of human life, it brought disgrace upon the entire human family "In Adam we all die," says the apostle, *i.e.*, we inherit his depravity, which has descended down through all generations as a demoralizing feature—which makes us contemptible creatures in the sight of our Creator.

Nothing but sin could have induced God to have turned his back upon that which he had made in his own image. Man, it seems, occupied the most lofty seat in the affection of God; he made him the ruler over all that he had made to dwell upon the earth, and but for sin, man the greatest organism of creation would have become almost a God on earth.

Who knows his power of mind before his fall? Surely his faculties were susceptible to a greater development than now. The devil told the woman to disobey God would make her more wise, but it seems to me that it is impossible for such a statement to be true—the devil, remember, is the father of lies.

It is my conviction that Adam was made more ignorant by the fall, for sin is only the outgrowth of ignorance. Man being made in the image of God necessarily made him an intelligent creature, susceptible to great development.

Now to say that it made him wiser to sin is virtually saying that sin is a mark of intelligence, while Solomon says that "Sin is a reproach to any people, but," says he, "righteousness exalteth a nation." Furthermore, if sin made Adam or the human family wiser, why are angels more wise than men? when they have never sinned. Let us dismiss the thought forever, that sin makes man wise--the devil told a lie which time has fully proven. *Sin is crime:* Crime is surely the outgrowth of transgression, and the greater the crime the more low the transgressor stands in the eye of the public, which contributes no honor to him but rather detracts. Crime is that which sinks men in despair. What melted the heart of Ahab and made him go mourning in sack-cloth? Crime. It was crime that made Nebuchadnezzar walk like a four-footed beast and gnaw grass like an ox.

It was crime that made Pilate die an exile. It is crime that makes Benedict Arnold a contemptible wretch and the scorn of every American citizen. It was crime that hanged Guiteau by the neck on the American gallows. It was crime that put the

thousands of souls in penitentiary that are groaning in chains to-day, and alas ! alas ! it was crime that made Cain cry out: " My punishment is greater than I can bear."

II. *Sin worketh eternal death.*—If Adam had not sinned he would not have died, or death would not have entered the human family " The day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," is the emphatic declaration of God, the Master of creation. This does not necessarily imply that there would not have been a natural death, but it fully shows that there would not have been any spiritual death.

The death that related the human family in creation was only to the body as a means to bring it back to the earth, which death had no sting and would have been nothing more than a mere sleep. " The sting of death is sin," and when there is no sin death has no sting. " Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," we were all made susceptible to its destructive power. Then it was sin that destroyed the spiritual life of the human family, by the transgression of Adam the ancestral head. Then sin is a destroying enemy to the soul. It throws man off from the favor of God making a shipwreck of his creative prominence and burying him in sin and shame. It deprives him of that eternal bliss which God has prepared for his eternal happiness, and makes him a slave to crime.

It drives him from the presence of a smiling God to dwell among the damned of hell. This is what it did for Cain. The day that he dyed his garments in his brother Abel's blood was the day that death seized him with all its frightful power, and he was made a fugitive and a vagabond upon the face of the earth. *But, sinners, Jesus has died* the just for the unjust, and the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin—though sin has made you black, his blood can make you white. “If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink of the water of life freely”—come without money or without price. Lay your soul at Jesus' feet and have your sins forgiven.

“The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life,” through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

III. *Sin is a burden to the human family.*—There are many pull-backs in life, but sin is the final cause of them all; when committed, it is a stumbling-block which lies across the path of the transgressor. It has stopped the progress of nations, destroyed kingdoms and made the great come very low. Sin places man under the law, subjects him to its penalty and makes him a slave to its claims. “The law gives sin its damning power.” Man, having sinned, stands under the law surrounded by all its frightful powers; helpless as a little child, groaning under the heavy burden which weighs him down to

the ground. It was a burden too heavy for Cain; he felt it as a mighty load upon him, with the law of God standing behind it as a strong support, and his arm was too weak to remove its claims; therefore he exclaims in the language of the text: "My punishment is greater than I can bear." It was a burden to Ahab when he had stood with Jezebel in stoning Naboth to death. When God's servant, Elijah, met him reading the magnitude of his crime he prostrated himself before the God of heaven in sack-cloth. It was a burden to Jonah. He refused to go to Nineveh in obedience to God's command and took ship for Tarshish; but God opened his fist and let loose the winds that stirred up the mighty waves of the sea, and dashed him out amidst the rolling billows for the prey of the fish, after which he felt willing to deliver the message of God and like an humble servant walked the streets and preached the gospel triumphant to the awaking of the nation.

David found it a burden in his transgressions, so did Solomon. Judas who stands out in history as a gospel traitor found it, I fancy, more than he could bear. "I have sinned," says he, "in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." So in agony he went and hanged himself.

Sinner, it is a burden to you too; it is so heavy that you can not travel Zion's road with it. God has a punishment, allotted you, if you do not repent of

your sins—hell is prepared for all the wicked, which is a punishment too severe for human souls to bear without pain and grief. When Dives lifted up his eyes in hell it was in the greatest suffering he cried : “ Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue ; for I am tormented in this flame.” Sin is a burden and a heavy burden. Dear Christians, how did you feel when you felt your sins upon you ? Every man must feel and acknowledge his sins before they will be forgiven. Cain had slain his brother and his garments were stained with his blood.—Sinners, you have crucified Jesus, the Son of the ever-living God, and your punishment is greater than you can bear, but Christ says: “ Father forgive them.”—If you will acknowledge your sins and forsake your evil ways, owning Christ as your Lord and Saviour, you may have your sins forgiven and be made a child of the household of God.

SERMON XXVIII.

EVIL WORKS.

Thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord.—1 KINGS XXI: 20.

THE darkest night of Israel's spiritual declension is seen in the reign of Ahab, the most wicked of all human beings who ever took delight in slaying God's servants, whose wrath was greatly intensified by the most wicked of all women, his infamous wife Jezebel. But our God who,

“ Moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform;
And plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm,”

had in reserve a fearless prophet, the greatest and most romantic character ever produced by Israel, whom he brought forth in the fullness of time to meet the raging powers of hell, and break in pieces the gods of Baal, and hold up the truth of his kingdom, who is known in history as *Elijah* the *Tishbite*, who was truly the greatest prophet since Moses and the type of John the Baptist, the great preacher of repentance.

Ahab thought that, after the battle of Mt. Carmel had ended, he (Elijah) had disappeared forever, and that he soon would be able to replace the four hundred and fifty prophets to Baal; that the people would soon forget his lost victory, and he would move on in worldly joy unconscious of the great "I AM," who rules the heaven and the earth; but when his wife by his side made another outrage by shedding the blood of Naboth, the living prophet comes forth bearing on his tongue the king's guilt and crime, telling him that God's stopping the rain three years and six months, and the slaying of Baal's prophets had not softened his heart, because he had sold himself to work evil, and that all of his evilness was in the sight of God, and that God would punish him and Jezebel. Now let us notice:

I. *Thou hast sold thyself.*—Man is a free agent; he serves whom he pleases as a matter of choice, and whatever he serves virtually becomes his master. Ahab had sold himself to Baal; his time and talent were all used in Baal worship.

When man becomes a slave to any thing or cause it is almost death to depart. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?" The controlling influences of evil are almost as strong as death, and he who is taken by them has subjected himself for trash to be a slave under a master who will make him a fugitive and a vagabond upon the earth, and

in death be driven away from God to dwell in utter darkness for ever, where there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Man sells himself to work evil and is therefore responsible to God. Ahab's wife had been instrumental in inducing him to do evil; it was she who slew the prophets; it was her hand that wrote the letters to the elders of Israel against Naboth, while Ahab consented thereto, which made his crime equal with hers.

God holds every one responsible for his own sin. One man cannot sell another, neither can one man hold another responsible for himself being sold. "Thou hast sold thyself," says the prophet, and God calls upon thee to answer for thyself.

II. *To work evil in the sight of God*, or to work evil against God. It is a sad thought that man will sell himself to do evil, when he has the same chance to do good.

Man has no excuse for his sins, God has provided every needful means for man to know his will concerning him. Aside from the Bible, he is taught that there is a God to whom he is indebted for his creation and existence. Paul says, "That which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made,

even his eternal power and God-head; so that they are without excuse." *

The above Scripture tells us that even the idolatrous heathen nations know enough about God from the works of creation to render them inexcusable in their idolatry, and are therefore accountable to God for their transgression.

God had duly instructed Ahab. He was king of Israel and had some knowledge of God. Aside from this, God had sent to him his prophet Elijah, and on Mount Carmel showed him plainly that he was God by answering by fire, but none of this seems to have affected him; he was bound, and no inducements held out by God's servant as proof of God's being could entice him to change his mind.

So it is with every wicked man. He starts out with the intention to do evil and goes about working for the devil and using every means in his power to destroy the kingdom of God.

Backsliders leave the sheepfold of God when they have made up their minds to work against God. As long as they are unwilling to work against God they cannot follow after evil works, but the day that they so harden their hearts as to believe that to sin is no harm with God, they are found in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity; they are they whom you may truly call the hardhearted.

* Rom. i: 19-20.

Satan hedges them in and ties them down to the pleasure of sin and shame. In talking with a backslider the other day I asked him why he did not come back to the church, "The devil has me tied," said he, "and I cannot get from him." That man has sold himself to work evil. When a man sells himself to work evil he loses sight of all that is good; the devil makes him believe that wrong is right, and he is as good or better than any man that lives, and that he stands a better chance for heaven than the majority of church members; but when in death he lifts up his eyes in hell he only finds himself deceived and the devil laughing at his calamity.

III. *Man's sins will find him out.*—Man may delight himself in his evil ways and think that all is well by hardening his conscience and setting at naught every principle of right; but Justice in the unexpected day will come upon him, lay the line to a plumb, like a thief in the night, and weigh him for what he is worth and no more, saying: "Behold I come quickly and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be," and now "let him that is unjust be unjust still; and him that is filthy be filthy still."

Ahab was very sick because Naboth consented not to give up his vineyard, but when Jezebel sent him word that Naboth was dead and that the vineyard was his it seems that he was made well; but

that eye that never slumbers saw him, and the good old prophet, Elijah, was sent to read him his doom, that had been sealed by the blood of Naboth.

The wicked king with bloody hands, stained garments and guilty conscience is aroused in great alarm; in horror he exclaims: "Hast thou found me, oh mine enemy?" "I have found thee," replied the bold hero of God's truth. "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood," said he to Ahab. "Such measure as ye mete shall be measured to you again," says the great teacher, which is a standard truth for all ages and a guide for all nations. Ahab's stout heart was made humble; he stopped eating; and in sackcloth he went mourning; just fancy you see him rending his clothes like a madman and throwing himself upon the ground in sorrow and weeping.

The prophet's words to him were loud and very heavy, and they fell in his heart like burning coals of fire. The beginning of sin may be sweet but its ending is bitter shame.

IV *Those who sell themselves to do evil will reap sorrow as a reward.*—Benedict Arnold received at the hands of the British ten thousand pounds and a generalship in their army as a reward for betraying his native country. He sold himself to work evil, but behind him followed the condemnation of a

civilized world, which turned black the shining record of every gallant deed that he had ever performed under the American flag, and fixed his name in history like that of Judas, who sold our Lord for thirty pieces of silver as a synonym of treachery, the blackest vice of human deeds. The very men who led him to the evil denied him in the end.

He was ignored by the House of Lords, and known and watched throughout England as a traitor whose garments were stained in the deepest dye of human vice. "Thou sold thyself to work evil against thy country," seems to have been the thoughts of every true heart that gazed upon him, and every citizen who reads of him frowns upon his record with the greatest contempt.

So with every one who sells himself to do evil. "The wages of sin is death." The gambler sells himself for the pleasure of card-playing, the ball-room traveller sells himself for the pleasure of dancing, the drunkard sells himself for the pleasure of drinking, the thief sells himself for the pleasure of stealing, the peacebreaker sells himself for the pleasure of breaking or disturbing the peace of others, and they all in the end reap eternal death.

"If ye live after the flesh ye shall die."

SERMON XXIX.

SPIRITUAL OFFENSES.

Woe unto the world because of offenses ! for it must needs be that offenses come ; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh !—MATT. XVIII : 7.

DEAR Christian friends, our discussion this morning strikes an atmosphere of sad thought, yet it is attended by such strains of everlasting joy, as fall from the lips of the divine Speaker, that cannot be found elsewhere. The declaration of the text is striking yet consoling, and full of life to the soul that intends to reach heaven when done with this sinful world. Christ had just spoken words which showed the greatness of his care for his followers while they travel through this sin-stricken world, and now tells the trials and crosses that await them on the way.

I. *The world is made wretched because of sin.*—“Woe unto the world,” says Christ, an exclamation which expresses great emotion. Offenses come through the world, that is, through the people of the world. “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” Angels have nothing to do with breaking

the peace of God's saints on earth. Man wars against himself, he fights his own interest and lessens the prosperity of himself and others. There is no place here fit for the children of God to dwell. "They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheep-skins and goat-skins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; Of whom the world was not worthy," says Paul. But for sin this world would be a garden of pleasure. Sin having taken control of the human heart has made man wretched. The soldiers of the cross are constantly fighting against principalities and powers of darkness, but our dear Redeemer says to us: "Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." We are following in his footsteps and are willing to follow wherever he goeth. The devil is king of spiritual wickedness, he rules in darkness and we are called to fight against him. "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing, in me," says Christ; we are not of the world, therefore it knows us not. The whole world is cursed because of sin, it is a wilderness of woe; every enterprise for good is hindered, every principle of truth is rebutted by evil, and even the Son of God is crucified.

II. *The Church of Christ is surrounded on every hand by enemies.*—Christ came and established his church by breaking down the devil's kingdom and

taking away the armor in which he trusted. He took the throne as the incarnate Son of God when polytheism was about to reach its highest possible glory beneath the canopy of heaven, by driving back the powers of darkness and chasing the king of hell to the bottomless pit. "I saw Satan as lightning falling from heaven," says he. John the Baptist proclaimed him coming as the greatest of all, with a fan in hand, purging his floor well before gathering his wheat in his garner. As the conqueror of the world he treads the winepress alone and builds up his kingdom among the nations of the earth.

1st. *Every power of evil is in direct opposition to the Christian religion.*—There is infidelity, declaring the non-existence of God and throwing up its power against inspiration. There is deism, the creed of the deist, denying the revelation of God and following the light of nature and reason. There is polytheism, declaring a plurality of Gods, which denies the existence of one self-existent God. There is atheism, which denies boldly the existence of a supreme intelligent being, and numbers of other creeds, all rushing down like the dashing tide of the ocean wave against the fountain current of divine truth. But the Christian, resting safe in the sure bark of faith, rides over the tossing waves and dashing billows with King Jesus standing at the helm repeating the declaration of his established founda-

tion: "On this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?"

2nd. *There are internal enemies* against which we have to fight. The above evils or combats are external; they only resist our course as mere drops of rain falling on or against a stone building well founded on a rock. But these about which I will now speak are in our arms, very near our souls; about which our Lord had an occasion to speak when he said, "If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee," and about which he warned his disciples to take notice when he said: "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." It takes wisdom as well as meekness to contend with the enemies of our household.

The Israelites in attacking Ai were hindered by Achan, a man of their own ranks, whose lust for spoil had made him unfaithful; while they stood in fearless battle array making charge on their enemies; their greatest offender was found in their own ranks, who had hid in his camp a Babylonish garment, two hundred shekels of silver and a wedge of gold. By this act of transgression Israel was made

to halt in sorrow and weeping; even Joshua and the gray-haired elders were made by the heartrending pains of grief to mourn.

The greatest outrage ever made on the government of America was by one of its native citizens, Benedict Arnold.

The greatest act of treachery ever performed in the divine government was by Judas, one of the twelve, chosen by our Lord to be a witness of his works. It was said once of an eagle that, while it soared aloft almost beyond human gaze, it was seen coming to the ground, all at once, with the rapidity of a dead motion. At first no one was able to tell what threw it off its flight; but after a careful examination it was found that in seeking prey it had gathered in its claws a weasel which, while it soared toward the stars, had sucked the last drop of its life blood. The poor eagle had been able to escape the ball of the marksman's rifle, but was thrown from its flight by that which it had gathered to rescue itself from death. So with the children of God those whom we take to be our best friends, often prove to be our greatest offenders.

“ Oh for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by every foe,
That will not tremble on the brink
Of any earthly woe.”

III. *Offenses increase with the Ages.*—Every rota-

tion of the earth seems to carry the world downward. Man by skill is growing more wicked every day; the men of every generation are more inventive because they have the follies of their fathers on which to improve.

The men of Nineveh were not able to resist the preaching of Jonah in that day; but 1885 years ago the Jews could resist and reject the Son of God, and for this reason said Christ that the men of Nineveh would "rise in judgment and condemn them;" and looking forward in the future he saw that evil would be greatly intensified and that the powers of darkness would rage high in every part of the land; so, as he sat on Mt. Olives one day, he said to his disciples: "Take heed that no man deceive you, for many shall come in my name saying, I am Christ and shall deceive many," and "because iniquity abounds the love of many shall wax cold." "Beware of false prophets in sheep-clothing, for they shall arise and show signs." His prediction is being fulfilled every day. Men, wolves in sheep-clothing, are crying every day in the name of Christ, and when you find them out they are working for the devil.

Looking into the future a little further he said to them: The day will come when men will kill you and think they doeth God service. That day is now at hand. When Guiteau assassinated President

Garfield, just a few years ago, he declared on the gallows that he did God service. — Smith in Alexandria last week walked the streets and hunted — Wise in the night until 11 o'clock, and he said to a reporter the next day: "Could I have found him I believe that I would have done a duty to myself, my country and to my God to have drawn my knife across his throat." Seeing all of this our Lord says: "Men ought always to pray, and not to faint," for he saw that offenses were coming, and that transgressions were rising very high, and men were leaving their first love. In view of all this he asked the sad question, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

The Apostle Paul had reference to the increase of iniquity when he wrote his son Timothy: "I CHARGE thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; preach the word; be instant in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."*

The apostle's prediction is fulfilling every day.

* 2 Tim. iv : 1-4.

Some members in the church want the preacher to talk and preach to please them; they set themselves as judges and declare that he must say nothing but that which pleases them; they cannot bear sound doctrine.

They soon get displeased with the preacher and want one to please them. But, dear Christians, in the face of all the powers of darkness let us set out afresh to win the prize. God's grace is sufficient to lead us on.

“Thou dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
'Till all the ransomed Church of God,
Be saved to sin no more.’

“Offenses will come, but woe unto the man through whom they come.”

Our sorrows will cease in this life, while his will just begin.

SERMON XXX.

GOD'S VISIT IN WRATH.

Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.—MATT. XXIV : 28.

IF we could walk to-day over the wasted ruins of Jerusalem, we would undoubtedly fancy that we could even see the footprints of God where he walked over eighteen hundred years ago in wrath among a wicked and perverse generation, who had forsaken him, and laid waste its shining glory to the gaze and mockery of the whole world.

But he did no more against Jerusalem or the Jews than he will do to-day against any city or people who live as they lived and sin as they sinned. To every wicked kingdom, nation or people the day of “the Lord will come.”

I. *God's law forbids transgression.*—God takes no pleasure in sin, neither can he favor it. He made man righteous, pure and holy; and by voluntary transgression he fell, and in his fall humanity is degraded. Now God uses every means in his power to redeem man; his every action is to this end. He sent prophets after prophets, all pro-

testing against sin, and at last gave his Son to die the death of the cross. "Howbeit, I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate." Again he says: "The soul that sinneth shall die," for "The wages of sin is death."

II. *In all ages God has visited the transgression of men.*—God holds men responsible for their sins and calls for repentance, "And the times of this ignorance,"* etc. And wherever repentance is not found his law moves to condemnation. In the days of Noah the flood came and baptized the world in a deluge of God's wrath.

Sodom and Gomorrah were overthrown and baptized in fiery flames of his wrath.

So with the Jews when they reached the climax of transgression. God made the Romans his angels of war to overturn Jerusalem and destroy them and their greatness. But, says the atheist, the scientist, the worldly-wise man, "These are not God's visits in wrath, but only a little misfortune to the people, about which I could have told them beforehand had I only thought of it; sin has nothing to do with it"—like the world is saying about the great earthquake that shook almost the whole continent of America the other day. "It is only the earth settling a little," say they; "it is no mark of God's

* Acts xvii : 30, 31.

displeasure for sin; the sin of the people has nothing to do with it." But let us see whether God has brought these many judgments upon the people for sin, or whether they came as mere matter of choice, which was only a little misfortune.

In the sixth chapter of Genesis, beginning with the fifth verse, read to the eighth. This shows plainly that sin caused the destruction of the world and that God had a hand in it, and in fact was the only hand that moved, which was a high hand above all hands. Again read Genesis, the eighteenth chapter from the twentieth to the twenty-first verse. So it was with the Jews' downfall in the overturn of Jerusalem; God's abhorrence for sin was their great destruction. "Because iniquity abounds, the love of many shall wax cold," says Christ. And so it was last Tuesday night, one week ago, when this earth was rocking as a cradle, the great mountains tumbling, trees bowing, and women and children crying and men weeping; it was God that was walking across the world in token of his wrath, only surveying the nation's transgression. Before he destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah he said: "I will go down and see whether they have done according to the cry."

The Jews were alarmed four years before their great kingdom fell, Cestius laid siege and shook Jerusalem's very foundation, A.D. 66, and fell back

on retreat for some purpose only known with God; some said it meant nothing, while others said it meant judgment, and about four years from that very day Titus came, and in five months brought the entire city to ashes, with the exception of three towers on the western wall.

Nowadays the preacher must not talk of God's wrath; if he does he is a silly dunce or a superstitious fool. If he speak of judgment he is called a "fanatic;" and the world cries out "silence him," but we need not be surprised at such: for Christ says, "because iniquity abounds the love of many shall wax cold." The people of Sodom stood on the brink of eternal destruction when Lot went out to hunt his sons-in-law to bid them flee, but he appeared to them as one that mocked.

God has said that judgment will come, and before his word shall fail heaven and earth will pass away. Christ said false prophets would arise; so they have, but he tells us not to believe nor follow them. Men are going about the earth to-day, making their scientific utterances, saying that they know what God is doing. Know how? "By science," say they, "and judgment is far off now," when Christ says not even the angels shall know that day and hour, none but the Father.

These great scientific men are false prophets. They remind me of Barchocheous who called him-

self Christ of Balaam's prophecy, who deluded rabbis and raised an insurrection against the Roman government; which was put down only by the shedding of blood. Now for sin having nothing to do with the calamities befalling this country, let us see. I read in last Tuesday's paper this:

“Here in Charleston the great men are telling the people, ‘Don't mind God's moving; look him square in the face. You are all righteous, sin has nothing to do with this, God is not visiting in wrath.’” I am here to say, as God's humble servant, that every hardship that befalls any nation or people is caused by sin. The Jews' downfall is predicted in Deuteronomy xxviii: 53-61, as being caused by sin, and Josephus affirms the fact when he speaks thus: “I shall, therefore, speak my mind here at once briefly, that neither did any other city ever suffer such miseries, nor did any age ever breed a generation more fruitful in wickedness than was this, from the beginning of the world.”

It was their transgression that caused their distress. There was no pain and sorrow in this world before sin came; and if sin be taken away, if all the world be brought back to its first state, pure and holy, it would be heaven here below and glory all around.

“Wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.” — Wherever transgression

rages to death or wherever an individual, a nation or people have filled their cup with iniquity, there you will soon see coming God's angels with uplifted swords to slay.

Let us not be deceived, for God is not mocked. The American people, the South especially, should regard every calamity as God's indignation against them, for it appears to me that they have sinned until they are almost a carcass; they have heaped sin upon sin, iniquity upon iniquity, crime upon crime, and if they are not dead they must be sick almost unto death.

Look at the gambling houses, look at the cheating in merchandise, look at the Sabbath-breaking, look at the blaspheming, look at the theft and drunkenness, look at the houses of ill repute carried on in this country among this people.

They ought to be looking for God in judgment every time it thunders. Instead of that they are crying, "We are a righteous people." God help the nation to see its error and repent. "I tremble for my country," said Thomas Jefferson, "when I remember that God is just."

III. *In judgment God is exalted.**

1. *In just execution.*—In all that God does can be seen his justice. In his visit to this nation twenty-one years ago when he overturned the entire govern-

* Isaiah ii : 17 ; Psalm xlvii : 10.

ment and liberated four millions of human souls, he was exalted in justice. The half of the horror of the American slavery has never been told, and you who remember it can say God was just in his judgments on the South.

2. *In the rescue of his saints.*—In all ages God has ever stood by the righteous; he will not destroy them with the wicked.

In the flood the righteous were saved, in the fall of Sodom they were saved, in the fall of Jerusalem they were saved, and at the end of the world they shall all be saved, not one shall perish.

SERMON XXXI.

CHRISTIANITY THE NATION'S ONLY SAFEGUARD.

The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come.—
ACTS II : 20.*

TAKE away the solar system of our moral world, and the nations of the earth would be left to ever feel their way in the dark; and to take away the religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, would make this beautiful world a hell.

I. *The religion of Jesus Christ has triumphed over all other religions.*

The coming of Christ was to set up a kingdom that should break in pieces all other kingdoms by the sway of his sceptre, which is a right sceptre. The world bows not to his sway without consideration.

His teachings have undergone the most severe technical examinations. Men walk into his kingdom when they find his power to be greatest and his works to be supreme.

* See Isaiah xiii : 10.

They try other creeds and doctrines as means of salvation and compare them with Christ's, and finding his to be the most genuine they cling to the most sure and lasting; children forsake what has proved to be their father's destruction. The Hindoos honored Buddha about six hundred years before Christ as a great man, so much so that Buddhism became their religion in the Indian Islands and a part of Asia, but Christianity has given to Buddhism a death-blow, and Jesus is honored and not Buddha.

Brahma was once respected as the god of creation, but the world has learned him not so to be and his isms sink with him in despair.

Zoroaster taught his creeds of isms among the Persians, but the introduction of Jesus Christ proved his overthrow.

Mohammed lived as late as 632, the father of Mohammedanism, which was prompted as the proud boast of the age, but Christianity has triumphed above it. The religion of Jesus Christ is not to be confined to any geographical boundary lines, but its sway is universal; it is not the glory of any one race or people alone, but the salvation of all mankind.

Men are leaving polytheism everywhere and crying: "There is one true God, and one true faith, and one true baptism." Isis is no longer esteemed the great benefactress of art and wealth, etc.

II. *It is the Nation's only safeguard.*—The great-

est proof of God's intelligence is that his teachings when adhered to lift humanity up to a higher standard of true morals.

None but a pure fountain can send forth pure water. Association in all cases will beget similarity: "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise; but a companion of fools shall be destroyed," is the declaration of Solomon, the wise man; and is as true to day in this stage of humanity's existence as it was in the age of Solomon. Christianity is the only civilizing agency given human beings. The only light we have to shine upon our course to guide us through the dark path of ignorance, is God's communications.

In the gift of his Son Jesus Christ the righteous, humanity was revolutionized and placed in a new state of circumstances. All the advancement the nations made in civilization before the advent of Christ is as much credited to God as that made since.

The nations of antiquity felt about in darkness, advancing a step or two now and then when they could hear a divine sound. When Paul reached Athens he found erected among the Grecian gods an altar to an unknown God. This unknown God, dear brethren, had been their guide through all ages, although his hand had not been visibly recognized; just as soon as they became informed respecting the existence of this God they were willing to credit all

to him. Our Lord was highly exalted over polytheism, when he stood up above the gods of this world and said of himself, "I am the light of the world."

No nation or people finds advancement aside from this light, for he lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The Bible contains the will of God; it is the world's law-book, the foundation code of all governments; no lawyer, however learned has ever been able to produce a code of laws independent of it. In it we find a historical record of the world, beginning with creation, that cannot be disputed.

It gives account of all nations, showing their uprising and downfalling. Now what would we do without the Bible? We would be lost for a record of past events as well as a guide. Now, in accounting for the advancement of this our government, I would say that we are strictly indebted to Christianity. The religion of Jesus Christ has been this country's safeguard from the beginning.

III. *In the absence of Christianity we are left in despair.*—Men are very ready to say that they see no good the Christian Church does, and that it keeps the people poor, for it is always calling for money; but if all the Christians were taken out of the world they would find a great change in things.

The religion of Jesus Christ is the salt of the world, and when taken away every enterprise for

good will fall; church edifices will be turned into bar rooms, and every institution of learning into gambling dens; men will no longer esteem one another's rights, but will go about like madmen, cutting one another in pieces; husbands will no longer respect their wives, nor mothers their children, but in every household there will be the greatest confusion.

Jesus Christ is represented as the light of the world; and truly he is, and, dear brethren, when this light is taken away the world will be left in the dark. The Christians have power with God. When God was about to destroy Sodom, he told Abraham if there could be found ten righteous people he would spare the city. Just see what great power ten righteous people could have had with God.

Some men are lost to know why it is that God blesses them, when they are violent sinners? and after a little consideration they conclude that they are better than the Christians, and it is more wise to be wicked than righteous; so, onward they go in sin; but, my friends, let me tell you, God blesses you because you live in the land with the righteous.

Your mothers' prayers have brought God's blessings upon you, which you have never regarded as being worthy of your notice. When there are no righteous people to be found in this world—when

the religion of Jesus Christ is totally rejected by men —when truth is totally abhorred and denied, this world will be a wilderness of woe, and the gross darkness of sin will universally prevail.

SERMON XXXII.

THE WORD OF GOD A SURE GUIDE.

I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God.—REV. VI : 9.

THE word of God has always withstood a strong resistance. It is incompatible with evil and a conflict with sin.

But it has always had friends and supporters who were not only willing to contend for its success but die in its defense.

Because: It is pure and holy.—The words of the Lord are pure words.*

It is the testimony of God and the world's only safeguard.—Creation is a great evidence of God's existence, but his word is a greater. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." †

These are firm declarations, coming directly from the mouth of God through his servants, of his existence, which are not without witness of his wonderful works; for on Mt. Carmel he was acknowledged to

* Ps. xii : 6 ; Ps. cxix : 140 ; Prov. xxx : 5.

† Is. xlv : 22 and xlvi : 9.

be God by his enemies. “And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God.” *

It is our only guide.—“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.” †

It is powerful even to save, and unchangeable.—“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” ‡

* 1 Kings xviii : 39.

† Ps. cxix : 9.

‡ Heb. 4 : 12; John viii : 32.

SERMON XXXIII.

RECOLLECTION OF PAST EVENTS.

Remember Lot's wife.—LUKE XVII: 32.

WE are too apt to forget both national and personal adversities, the remembrance of which should better fit us to abjure and shun evil. No person can rightly think of the calamity which befell the inhabitants of Sodom, without being thrown under the veil of solemnity.

It is one of the most conspicuous examples of God's disapprobation for transgression that is recorded in history. Christ takes up the incident to teach us a striking lesson respecting the overthrow of the world in the great day of his final triumph in the general judgment.

“So will it be,” says he, which gives us to know that his second coming will be when the world least expects him. After giving a full description of the circumstances which surrounded the fall of Sodom, he entreats us to remember Lot's wife, who started to the mountain of refuge but was thrown into a pillar of salt for looking back toward the fading glory of that wicked city and people.

The text is full of instruction. It teaches us:

I. *God's abhorrence for sin.*—Obedience is the greatest honor which man brings upon himself, and disobedience is a dishonor which throws him in the lowest pit of shame.

Lot's wife was told to look not behind, nor tarry in any of the plains but escape to the mountain, lest she be consumed, but while she hurried over the lonely road that led to refuge she allowed her mind to reflect on the sinking glory of that magnificent city; she undoubtedly heard the screams of some friends whose voices she probably felt able to recognize, or was charmed by the recollection of some remembered hours of happiness, spent there in vain-glory; she looked back; for which act of disobedience she was driven to shame and disgrace.

God's displeasure fell upon her. It would have been far better for her to have obeyed God and lived. God has no fellowship with sin and disapproves even of its existence, and says, "The soul that sinneth shall die." When sin is committed, punishment is unavoidable. When Adam stooped to transgression he fell beneath God's favor; shame came upon him, and he was found trying to hide himself among the trees of the garden.

When Cain slew his brother Abel he was driven from the presence of the Lord and made a vagabond upon the earth.

II. *God makes examples of the wicked.*—A father once gave his boy a tree for a pet, which grew in the garden. The little boy thoughtlessly drove many nails in his tree, which he found disfigured its beauty, and his father advised him to draw out the nails and so he did, but lingered around the tree weeping. When asked by the father what was the matter, he said: drawing out the nails had left his tree full of holes.

In transgression, man is branded for eternity. His evil deeds are spread upon the pages of history, and over against the crime stands the penalty of God's law, which served his awful doom.

In the first book of the Bible we are taught Adam's transgression, over against which stands his excommunication from Eden, his happy abode. In the first period of the world's history, we are taught that the people grew very wicked, just over against which stands the record of the flood.

In the book of Numbers, we read of Pharaoh pursuing the Israelites, which people God had commanded him to let go; and in the same book we read of his destruction in the Red Sea with all his hosts. We read in the same book of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram who rose up against Moses in disobedience to God by dissuading many from obedience, and we read in the same chapter of two hundred and fifty princes sinking beneath the earth.

So with Lot's wife; she was told by God's angels not to look back, but she did look back, and was made a monument of God's wrath—an example for the whole world to behold and all nations to abhor. Well may the Psalmist say, “When the wicked are cut off thou shalt see it,” for in all cases, wherever God smites, the print of his hand is seen forever. Historians say that she stands to-day as fresh as she was the day she turned to a pillar of salt, to the gaze of every passer-by. — Riel committed treason last year (1885) against the government of Great Britain, and his life was sought by the citizens with unprecedented zeal—in death upon the gallows he was branded by his countrymen.

A few days ago — Joyner and — Joyner, of Southampton county in this State, approached their father's room, armed with axes, in the still hour of night, while he was asleep, and chopped his body to pieces. In the presence of themselves and God did they commit this shameful deed; but it has become known throughout this entire country. However bright might have been the prospects of these girls, this violent act of murder will ever remain a lion of destruction in their path.

III. *Man may escape one judgment and be taken by another.*—Thanks be to our God that he is slow to anger.

This woman escaped the burning plains of Sodom

in God's mercy, but perished on her way to the mountain. God holds man accountable for not obeying his directions.

This woman undoubtedly thought herself beyond danger, because she was a step or two from the falling wall of Sodom. Very soon after the angel of the Lord let go her hand she forgot the orders of God; so with men to-day, many perish in the way. "He that endureth to the end shall be saved."

I meet people often who tell me that they were baptized years ago but are now out of their Church by reason of having looked back. They judge themselves to be all right, because they are a little better off than some others in worldly goods; but in death, unless they do their first work over, they will be like Lot's wife.

"He that puts his hands to the plow and looketh back is not fit for the kingdom."

Men would be far better off in this world and the world to come if they would better consider along the line of duty. Remember! Oh! remember Lot's wife!

In sight of the mountain of refuge she perished.

God's words are laws and must be obeyed or his wrath must be endured.

SERMON XXXIV.

OUT OF THE WAY OF UNDERSTANDING IN THE CONGREGATION OF THE DEAD.

The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.—PROVERBS XXI : 16.

THE way of understanding is a straight and high way, and he who would walk therein is piloted by God's revelation, while the way of the congregation of the dead is crooked and low, and those who wander therein are led captive by the devil.

I. *Man wanders from right.*—Righteousness existed before sin. The devil has no subjects but those who have strayed from God, the reason by which he has been able to mar them. Man was made holy and upright, and placed in the field of happiness to live forever in the favor of his Maker; he was all right; nothing was wrong about him.

God did not drive him away, but he strayed away at his own will by the act of transgression, which was contrary to God's approval. God loves man and he takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked,

and has therefore made the way of redemption to him possible by giving his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ the Righteous, to die, the just for the unjust. He has also given man the code of his kingdom (the Bible) in which is compiled the correct and direct statutes of his laws, which, by its teachings, shows the way so plain that the wayfaring man though a fool need not err therein.

Man is hedged in on every side by the law of right and understanding, and to do wrong he has to break over its walls by force.

First: There is conscience, the law of right written on the table of his heart, which fights his every attempt to do wrong, and the only way he can do evil is by setting aside its declarations and beating down its great power of persuasion, giving no attention to its teachings, and heedless to all its cries, going forth to sin like a horse in battle.

Secondly: There is nature that would teach him by her examples, in that she obeys God in every law. The seasons come at his orders: when it is time for winter, we have winter; when it is time for spring, winter gives way and spring takes its place; when it is time for summer, spring gives way and summer takes its place; and when it is time for fall, the summer gives way and fall takes its place, all obeying the Creator, God, without the slightest variation.

The world in its rotation moves at his orders,

holding all things in their created places, and bringing all things to God's desired standard. The sun holds his place, the moon stays and moves in her place; and every star, every planet, knows nothing but to obey God, the Creator.

The clouds veil the heavens and water the earth at his command, and at his orders they fall back somewhere, God only knows, without any complaint. The winds at his word bring themselves together and roll across the heavens, beating upon the earth, rumbling like chariots drawn by war-horses; and the thunders at his command shake the earth and make it appear as though the world were sinking in despair—none of these things have erred from the will of the Almighty God since creation, which is a guide to man if he will only take heed; to disobey his Maker is to do what none of these do.

Thirdly: In his hand he holds the Bible, which is a bright and shining light falling constantly upon his path, that he may not wander in darkness. And to do wrong he goes directly against its teachings. Man to do wrong, dear brethren, has a great army to fight. Well may Solomon say: "he wanders out of the way of understanding," for he does go a poor wanderer. A wanderer is one who goes without knowing where he goeth. It was so with the prodigal son; with his *alls* upon his back, his father, his best friend, behind him, he wandered out of the way

of understanding. Just so with sinners—they go wandering from God, seeking rest and finding none.

Oh, sinner, cease to wander,
And to Jesus turn and live;
Seek him while he may be found,
Eternal life is his to give.

II. *Why man wanders astray.*—The devil has set up his kingdom upon the earth in direct opposition to God's. He seeks to draw man from the path of truth that he may make him a wanderer here and a vagabond in eternity, to succeed in which he has mapped out possible ways to carry out his end.

First: He teaches man to reject salvation, because it is a mystery. He brings him to doubt even the existence of God and leads him out of the way of understanding when he might have conversed with Christ a little as Nicodemus did, and been made wise unto salvation. Man should not doubt salvation because it is a mystery, for it would not be worthy of man's attention if it were not above his finite conception, to show God's power above man's. It would be absolutely impossible for a plan so great as that of salvation, teaching as much as it teaches, blessing as much as it blesses, and saving as much as it saves, without embodying great mysteries, for it bears relation to God who is infinite, consequently it is a mystery bordering on a mystery. It should not be rejected because it is a mystery.

The whole of creation is a mystery The sun is a mystery—why don't men say there is no sun? The moon is a mystery—why don't men say there is no moon? The earth is a mystery which geologists have never been able to fathom—why don't they say there is no earth?

There would be just as much sense in saying so as there is in saying there is no God.

Secondly: He teaches him to⁴ doubt God's word. In this, the devil displays his greatest power, for if he can only succeed in getting a soul to doubt God he is sure to have him wandering.

Those who doubt seem to be his leading agents; for the Apostle Paul saw fit to earnestly caution Timothy against such characters, when he wrote him in mention of Hymeneus and Philetus, who doubted the resurrection: "Shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus."*

It is impossible for a man to have faith in that he doubts; and he who doubts God, cannot understand him; therefore he who doubts is a wanderer from the way of understanding.

- Oh, sinner, doubt not the God of peace,
For he who doubts is sure to err,
From the path of truth,
And in wisdom has no share.

* 2 Tim. ii : 16, 17.

III. *In the congregation of the dead.*—Men and brethren, this is a melancholy statement; it is the most sad of all I ever heard. Some people are afraid to go past graveyards in the noon-day time, and they rather you would inform them about their mother's death than to tell them that they have to go past that way at night. But, what think ye when the Master says, you shall remain there among the dead.

I was talking the other day with a man who was engaged four years in the last civil war. He said, the day Grant took Petersburg he was wounded, and owing to the greatness of the battle the wounded soldiers were not moved from the field until the next day. "The battle-ground," said he, "was my bed that night, and all that I saw that night was dead bodies of soldiers, and all that I heard was the groans of dying men, and it was the most dreadful night I ever endured." If this be the sorrow of a soldier, who is the most hard-hearted of all men, whose duty it is to take life, what can it be to those whose hearts are tender?

Oh, it is a sad thing to remain among the dead. Some people keep a great ado about going by a coffin shop—they say they can't bear to see a dead person. Some people will not live in Blandford, because the cemetery is over there; but how do those people think they can remain among the dead forever?

That man that goes Saturday night and spends his week's earnings in drinking and gambling, is dwelling among the congregation of the dead.

“The body without the Spirit is dead,” says James. He who has not the spirit of Christ is dead because of sin.

Out of the way of understanding is in the congregation of the dead.

SERMON XXXV.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.—1 PET. II : 2.

WHEN a soul confesses Christ he is but a babe; he must develop into manhood through a gradual process. He needs to go from weakness to strength.

Strength comes by exercise. If we would grow strong in muscular strength we must exercise our muscles, if in mental strength we must exercise our mind, and if in spiritual strength we must exercise the Spirit. The text, I think, is very fitting to the occasion; in the past three weeks we have received into the Church one hundred souls.

The apostle in the preceding chapter speaks of the spiritual birth. Ye have been “born again not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever;” and in the text compares such to new-born infants, and says, as they require and desire the aliments which nature has provided for their growth and development, so they should desire earnestly that heavenly nourish-

ment which is suited to their new nature. This he calls "sincere milk of the word," by which every soul will grow. We must grow in grace or we must retrograde—in life there is no standstill. My arm placed in a motionless attitude will waste and die; the same is true with every faculty of the human mind and heart; where there is no growth there must be decay.

This awakens in our mind a desire to know into what we are to grow. My answer consists of a threefold nature.

I. *We are to grow in knowledge.*—Every convert that comes into the Church of Christ is like the little child that enters the school-room ignorant of the alphabet, but by continual struggle and trial expects to reach manhood in scholarship.

Every soul enters the school of the Divinity through the same door, begins at the same place, takes up the same set of books and has the same teacher. Knowledge is the perception of truth and duty; it is the highest degree of the speculative faculty; it is the perception of God our heavenly Father and our duty as servants to him. We stand in our infancy surrounded by the boundless field of God's profound wisdom, and look upon the mystery of the kingdom and say, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it;" but the king speaks and says, "Seek and ye

shall find," for "it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven."

You who have entered the Church in the past few weeks have only been brought to the knowledge of the truth that there is a just, merciful and loving God, who gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believes in him should not perish but have everlasting life. This you believe with all your heart, and now you are to study his character, walk a little higher and higher into his lofty presence. To do this you must study his word prayerfully, "study to show thyself approved unto God." The words of God's mouth must be sweeter to you than much gold and silver. You cannot become wise unto salvation by associating with immoral characters and reading novels, but by seeking good and pure society and taking the Bible for your text book. "Ye are the light of the world," therefore let your light shine before men.

II. *We are to grow in faith.*—The more knowledge we have of God the stronger is our faith in him. In the sermon which I preached on last Sunday evening I tried to show or teach you what faith is, how the soul gets hold of it, and how it gets hold of him and draws him nearer to God. It is only necessary now for me to show you that this faith is susceptible to an increase; for you will soon step out into the deep waters of tribulations, when you will be glad to cry

“Lord increase our faith.” I said just a while ago that knowledge helped our faith. The more knowledge one has the more able he is to apprehend God’s possibilities. The centurion that came to Christ to have his servant healed requested that he only speak the word. The centurion was a man of authority, and his great knowledge seems to have controlled his faith.

Our Lord said that he “had not found so great faith, no not in Israel.” We have left some souls at the mercy-seat struggling in doubt; if they only had knowledge of God they would come out of doubt.

Knowledge of God takes a soul out of the valley of doubt, and stands him on the hill-top of faith, and then he looks to God through the Spirit. Thomas doubted the Saviour’s resurrection because he lacked knowledge—when our Lord showed him his bleeding side and hands he said, “Yea, Lord, I believe.”

1. Faith is *increased by love*. Young believer, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, mind and strength,” is the first command, and “thy neighbor as thyself,” is the second. “If ye love me ye will keep my sayings.” Knowledge is the foundation on which faith stands, and love is the prop that holds it up; faith in the absence of love totters and will finally fall. Judas did not love Jesus and therefore had no faith in him, and sold him for thirty pieces of silver; he had no more faith in him

at the end of three years than he had the first day he saw him. God forbid that any of you should prove unfaithful as Judas did. If we don't love Jesus we will love the world, and whenever we love the world we are sure to forsake the Lord. "Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world."

2. Your faith is to be increased by *good works*. You must work to keep your faith alive; when your faith dies you die. Always show your faith by your works. We must be active in God's vineyard. If ever the devil finds you idle he will practice his skill upon you—

An idle boy
Is the devil's toy.

The more we work for Christ the more we become like him. "He went about doing good," and we must do likewise.

"Must Jesus bear the cross alone,
And all the world go free?
No : there's a cross for every one,
And there's a cross for me."

III. *We must grow in grace.*—We who have been redeemed from the powers of sin and death do not dwell under the law but under grace, and by grace we are saved.

Grace is God's favor bestowed upon us, and he who grows in knowledge and faith is sure to grow

in grace. He who abides in faith stands very high in grace. Abraham was faithful in offering his son Isaac up to God and in many other duties, for which he was made the father of a great nation. Let us be faithful in all things and we will stand high in God's favor. It is the will of God that we enjoy his presence here below. The children of God should meet together often and enjoy themselves in praising him. Wherever two or three meet in his name he is there and that to bless.

“As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.”

SERMON XXXVI.

STANDING FAST IN BAPTIST FAITH.

Stand fast in the Lord.—PHIL. IV : 1.

BELOVED hearers, the epistle from which I take my text this morning was written by the apostle Paul to the Philippian Christians from prison in Rome.

The Philippians were the inhabitants of Philippi, a Roman colony in Macedonia. It was the first place at which the apostle preached the gospel on the continent of Europe. He had many converts there, notwithstanding his many conflicts, who stood firm for the Lord. Their fidelity to the cause of Christ merited the apostle's love and praise.

They were not giving heed to every sound of doctrine which they heard, but were standing firm in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free. The Judaizing teachers were among them, but had no success.

When they learned of the apostle's imprisonment at Rome they sent him a contribution by Epaphroditus, by whom he sent this letter in return thank-

ing them for it and giving them many exhortations to good works and steadfastness.

The chapter from which we take our text contains his conclusive remarks, which is a benediction full of grace. He exhorts them to steadfastness in the Lord, which implies that they were therein abiding.

The text comes to us with as much force and meaning as it came to the Philippians, and I trust that our hearts are as much prepared to receive it as theirs were. God, help us this day to perfectly understand thy truth and receive it in pure hearts.

I. *Why should we stand fast?*—My answer is three-fold: First, because we are right, and God is the captain of our salvation.

Second, because we have come through great conflict.

Third, because in the name, wisdom, and strength of our Redeemer we are succeeding.

1. *Because we are right, and God is the captain of our salvation.*

Right is right, forever has been and forever will be, and he who is right should stand fast, for a change would put him in the wrong.

We as Baptist believers are right, because we are on the Lord's side. We own Christ to be the head of the Church unto all things—"Upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." We believe that the Bible was

written by men divinely inspired, and that it has God for its author. We adopt the New Testament as our guide, accepting all it teaches. We believe that the act of baptism proper is immersion, and the subject thereof proper is a believer in Jesus Christ—“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”

Moreover, we believe that baptized believers only have a right to the Lord's table to participate in his supper, for it was to them only that he said, “This do in remembrance of me, for as often as ye do this ye show forth my death until I come.” Therefore we claim that we are right, and we will stand fast trusting in him who says, “If ye love me keep my commandments.”

2. Because we have come through great conflict.

The Philippian Christians for the faith which they held had suffered much affliction.

The apostle planted Christianity among them in the midst of wild fires of persecution and hardship, and as they accepted the faith which he represented in the face of all opposition they necessarily became participators with him in his afflictions; therefore having an eye to their possible conflicts the apostle bids them in this epistle to stand fast in the Lord, that they might not be discouraged and become again entangled with the yoke of sinful bondage.

We are able to sympathize with the Philippian Christians, for our career in this country, especially

as Baptists, has been somewhat similar to theirs in Philippi.

Our Lord's declaration that, "in the world ye shall have tribulation," has been clearly demonstrated in our conflicts.

We now rejoice in the brightness of noonday; but as we look back upon the record of the past our gaze is met with the blackness of the night through which our fathers passed.

We need not survey the persecutions of England to read our forefathers' names upon bloody flames, and number John Bunyan's groans in London jail, but turn our attention to the confines of our own country, yea our own State, *viz.*, Virginia. This is not thought to have been a country of religious persecution since the days of American civilization; yet history shows that the Baptists have been indicted and tried at the civil bar for the testimony which they held.

Roger Williams was banished from the Massachusetts colony—a man of distinction and renown, who played a conspicuous part in the colonization of this country, because he held the Baptist faith; and from his day for many years the sect was evil spoken of everywhere.

When they appeared in Virginia they met the scorn and contempt of the State, and almost every plan that human ingenuity could invent was con

cocted to retard their progress; even many who were in civil authority raised their hands against them, and inverted the law to persecute them.

It is a fact recorded in your law-books that on the 4th of June, 1768, three preachers and others were arrested in Spottsylvania Co. by the sheriff and carried before three magistrates and bound over to the court in the sum of £2000 for the testimony which they held.

These persons remained in jail several months and preached the gospel to outstanding persons, who undoubtedly came to take a peep at them for sport and folly from behind the bars.

Having suffered thus, we to-day have every reason to stand fast; for to turn back or depart from the faith would be disloyalty to truth and abuse to the fidelity of our forefathers.

3. *Because in the name, wisdom and strength of our dear Redeemer we are succeeding.*

There is no denomination upon the face of the earth that has been the victim of as much cruelty as the Baptists. "From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force,"—and yet in spite of all the wickedness of the wicked we have succeeded and are still moving on in triumph.

Let us see what has been the success of the Baptists in the United States since 1636. In 1636 Roger Williams, a young Baptist preacher of the gospel,

who was expelled from the Massachusetts colony for the faith which he held, took up his abode in Rhode Island, where he gave publicity to his persuasion, and founded the Baptist church on this continent. From that day until now the progress of the Baptists as a denomination in the United States is as follows:

“28,953 Churches; 2,572,238 members; 16,191 Ministers; 164 foreign missionaries; 125 institutions of learning; 16,426 pupils, of which 1,503 are ministerial students; 91 weekly and monthly periodicals, \$777,911 worth of libraries, containing 412,120 volumes; \$7,713,716 worth of educational property in grounds and buildings.”

Now just think about it: two hundred and fifty-one years ago the Baptists as a denomination in the United States had but one member, and to-day they number millions, representing as much or more intelligence than any other denomination, and in fact are the leaders in civilization. God is giving us the “heathen for our inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for our possession.”

“Oh, speed thee, Christian, on thy way,
And to thy armor cling;
With girded loins the call obey
That grace and mercy bring.”

II. *How shall we stand fast?*—My answer is two-

fold—first, by being united; second, by being faithful to truth.

1. *By being united we shall stand.*—The great truth spoken by Jesus Christ, the master teacher of the universe, that, “if a house divide against itself it cannot stand,” has been clearly demonstrated in all ages.

It is not only true in relation to spiritual affairs but secular as well. In every vocation of life union is prerequisite to success. If we would succeed as Baptists or as the Church of Christ we must be united.

“If we love one another God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.” “Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!” Therefore, brethren, let us be united. Let us be united in *faith*, that we all believe that there is but one faith and one baptism; let us be united in *prayer*, and pray for God’s will to be done in earth as it is in heaven; let us be united in *action*, and work for the down-pulling of Satan’s kingdom and the building up of the kingdom of our dear Redeemer on the ruins thereof.

2. *We must be faithful supporters of truth.*—“Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” “Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”

The truth is lovely for its authenticity; yes, it is “quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged

sword.” If we would stand fast we must stand by the truth,—for the truth is a mighty shield. Take away truth, and kingdoms will fall. Take away truth and nations will lose their power and glory. Take truth out of the world and the earth will dissolve like snow and the heavens will be no more. Brethren, hold fast to the truth; it is the sure foundation against which the powers of hell cannot prevail. In order to stand by the truth we must be preachers of the truth; for we are its witnesses, appointed by the Lord. “To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.” Let us be sowers of the truth and plant it all around us,—in our families, in our communities, in our cities, and in our country; and then shall the sound hallelujah be heard to earth’s remotest bounds.

“ Jesus shall reign where’er the sun,
Does his successive journey run ;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.”

III. *Stand fast in the Lord until death shall set us free and we shall be rewarded.*

“He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.”

“Let us not be weary in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not.”

Stand fast and Christ will reward us,—for if we sow in tears we shall reap in joy. “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” Christ is coming again to receive us unto himself, that where he is there we shall be also. He will escort his bride into heaven, that was prepared from the foundation of the world. He shall gather his elect from the four quarters of the earth; saints from all lands and countries shall be gathered by the might of his power, and in unbroken ranks we shall march up into glory; there we shall be known as the church militant shaking hands with the church triumphant, where sickness and sorrow cannot come, and where pains and death are feared no more.

“When we’ve been there ten thousand years,
Bright, shining as the sun
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise,
Than when we first begun.”

SERMON XXXVII.

THE GOOD CONFESSION.

And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.—*MATT. VIII : 19.*

MY dear hearers, these are the words of a scribe who undoubtedly was a convert to the faith and teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some theologians claim that he was a hypocrite, on the ground that the scribes were a kind of aristocratic sect. I don't know that this is a sufficient reason for us to suppose that he was a hypocrite, for the grace of God is fully sufficient to save the meanest of sinners. There is nothing said here nor elsewhere in the Scripture to my knowledge respecting his hypocrisy; therefore I think it would be imprudent for us to pass such judgment upon him.

But we will not dwell here; whether or not he was a hypocrite (that need not concern us mainly) he certainly makes a goodly confession about which this morning we purpose to talk. Our Lord laid before him in plain terms the conditions of his kingdom, and we do not find anywhere that he com-

plained or detracted from his confession. In the 21st verse we read of there being a disciple who asked the Saviour to allow him to first go and bury his father; but it does not tell us that it was this scribe, neither is it in the least implied. Therefore let us consider the philosophy of his utterance and not stop to criticise.

“And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master.” Who this man was by name we know not, but we would judge from the term, “certain scribe,” that he was a particular individual and probably distinguished from the rest of the multitude by his notability for some great work, for it may be that he had taken a decided stand against the rest of the scribes to follow the teachings of our Lord.

Notice:—“He came, and said unto him, Master.” He sought Jesus of his own accord; voluntarily he came and called him Master. This shows that he had some desire to follow Jesus, and had some regard for him and his teachings.

Now for his confession—“I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.” It is truly a goodly confession; but do we understand fully what it embodies? It places one under stern obligation. He who makes this confession sacrifices his relationship to the world, turns his back upon vanity, and declares eternal allegiance to Christ. Total submission to the cross and nothing less makes him a true fol-

lower of Jesus Christ. But, one would ask, where am I to follow Christ? I answer :

1. *To duty.*—Wherever duty calls we are to be found ever ready to answer “Lord, here am I.” Some people profess to be followers of Christ, but can never see their obligations to duty. Such people sadly mistake the purpose of their calling, for every one who is a true follower of Jesus Christ has something to do. The man whom Jesus healed at the pool of Bethesda was commanded to take up his bed and walk; not that another was to carry his bed for him, but it was his duty to carry it himself. “If any man would be my disciple let him first deny himself, take up his cross and follow me.” There are people in the Church who love to cry aloud “free grace,” and shout “glory, hallelujah,” but when you tell them about contributing to the support of the gospel, giving to the poor and visiting the sick, they are found lacking and very often absent. Such people are only nominal Christians, and when weighed in the balances of unbiased Justice will be found wanting.

Christ went about doing good, and he who would follow him must do likewise. Moreover, it is our duty to live chaste, virtuous, and consistent lives. There are people who believe that they can be followers of Christ and still follow the vices of the world; lie, steal, practice drunkenness and adultery,

break the peace of their neighbors, dance, gamble and do any and everything else that is of the world; such people are not followers of Christ, they are followers of the devil. Morality is one of the fixed principles of Christ's nature. He was in all points tempted yet without sin; and the command comes down to us from him: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Again:—There are persons who claim to have professed faith in Christ and desire to be followers of him who reject and set aside parts of his teaching, and say they are of no use. For instance, Christ commands every believer in his name to be baptized, and they say that baptism is of no use; consequently they take their chances to heaven without it.

Such persons are not following Christ. If we would follow Christ wheresoever he goeth we must follow him to the baptismal waters. In Jordan he stood and was by John the Baptist buried beneath its waves, and every one who follows him must be buried there with him. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," are the requirements and promise, and he who fails to meet the requirements need not expect the promise. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

2. We are to follow him to and through *poverty's vale*. Christ, in laying before the learned scribe the conditions of his kingdom, said, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Some people come to Christ through excitement. When they hear preached the might of his power and the glory of his kingdom they come running rejoicing loud and shouting high, crying "Master, I will follow thee wheresoever thou goest," thinking that there are carnal victories to be achieved and earthly rewards to be had; but when the Master lays before them the true conditions of his situation, which show that the prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in him, they are found falling back with the world, crying "Please have me excused." "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." Some people join the Church for nothing else but speculation. They come into the Church for popularity, to set themselves up in business; and when they find that it is not a speculating enterprise you see them falling out by the wayside and complaining against God for having not made them rich.

Men and brethren, let me say unto you: The kingdom of Christ is not of the world, and he who would be his disciple must first of all deny himself, take up the cross and follow him.

“ Let worldly minds the world pursue ;
 It has no charms for me ;
 Once I admired its trifles, too,
 But grace has set me free.

“ Deny thyself and take thy cross,
 Is the Redeemer’s great command ;
 Nature must count her gold but dross,
 If she would gain the heavenly land.”

3. *We must follow him to and through trials and tribulations.*—This to many is the insurmountable mountain; nevertheless it is the road that leads to heaven. The soul that travels Zion’s road must be tried by fiery trials.

“ Through flood and flames if Jesus leads
 I’ll follow where he goes,”

should be his motto, for this is the way the Saviour goes. The day that you turn your back on hell and set your face toward heaven is the day that Satan concocts his meanest plans to prove your overthrow. The travel of our Lord in this world was a constant war against sin and Satan, and he who follows after him must walk in his footprints. His groans in the garden of Gethsemane—“ My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death,” the scorn and hatred heaped upon him before Caiaphas and at Pilate’s bar, and the pains of crucifixion, most strikingly mark his tribulations in this world. And he has not exempted his followers from tribulation.

Tribulations for the Church of Christ are firmly embodied in the boundless purposes of God. "In the world ye shall have tribulation;" but he bids us to be of good cheer, for he has overcome the world. Therefore we must rejoice in tribulations, for the apostle says they worketh patience. "We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." The true followers of our Lord shrink not from tribulation. Those who fall by the way-side are the seed that fell upon stony places, where they had not much depth in the earth; wherefore fiery trials scorched them, and they withered away and died; while the true follower, having his eye upon eternal life, stands firm in the day of trial and cries, "Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest." "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

SERMON XXXVIII.

THE WATERS OF MARAH.

They went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter.—EXODUS XV : 22-3.

WHEN the Israelites had crossed the Red Sea, whose waves God divided for their convenience, they celebrated their deliverance from bondage with joy and thanksgivings.

Miriam, the prophetess, gathered the women around her and they made their timbrels ring with praise to God. But just before them was a most severe trial. They marched forth into the wilderness of Shur three days without water; and when they did find water it was so very bitter that they could not drink it. Now in relation to the text let us notice:

1st. *Life is a severe contest.*—“Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,” is a suitable injunction, to be strictly adhered to by all generations in all ages. We every day of our life march forth to battle, undertaking new responsibilities either for defeat or success.

We struggle not as unaccountable agents, but as responsible beings to God for everything we do, whether it be good or bad. Before us are set two roads, one leads to joy and the other to woe. Betwixt these two roads can be found no neutral ground; one or the other must be pursued, and whichever is pursued marks our destiny for eternity. Our choice in regard to which of the two roads we will pursue is altogether an individual matter; I cannot choose for another, neither can another make choice for me.

But, my friends, in the midst of your life struggle be sure that you make choice of the road that leads to joys on high.

2d. *We are in a wilderness in this life of sin and sorrow.*—We may have a few hours of joy, at which times the bright sun is so very visible that we may think there is no cloud ever to veil his glory, but soon and very soon we are brought into the wilderness of sin, engulfed into a tunnel of storm, discouragements and hardships, where every pleasure fades away and dies. The Psalmist spake well when he said: “The days of our years are three score years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be four score years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.” Sin has greatly corrupted the fountain of human life. “In Adam we all die.” The travel of the children of Israel

in the wilderness symbolizes the travel of the Church of Christ in this world. Here they traveled three days in the wilderness of Shur without water, and when they did find water it was so very bitter that they could not drink it. So with us, the children of the most high God, we are traveling through this world, a wilderness of sin; we find but few pleasures, and what few we do find are so intermingled with the bitterness of sin that we can not enjoy them.

The waters of Marah, when first taken into the mouth, appeared somewhat insipid, but soon became contemptible, bitter almost as death. So with sin, it may at first appear harmless, but its most injurious effects will soon be felt.

Marah was a well; so is sin, from which the human family drink—it is found everywhere. In every vocation of life there are upheavals and failures which sicken the heart of the most valiant. In merchandising, farming, medical practice, political pursuits, school-teaching and domestics are seen, felt and realized the fearful horrors of sin. With the *farmer*, it oftentimes happens that his crop falls short, which makes him unable in fall to meet his just demands; his last grain of corn, pound of meat, tobacco and lock of cotton are taken to settle his debts, and he and his family are left to starvation. Here he drinks from the waters of Marah. The *merchant*, oftentimes in the manipulation of the

affairs of commerce by the depression of prices, finds poverty staring him in the face; he is unable to meet the demands of his creditors, and consequently is forced to let go the cord of prosperity and fall away in despair. Here he drinks of the waters of Marah. With the *school-teacher*, it is sometimes impossible for him to meet the requirements of parent and child, and their complaints inflame public sentiment against him. Here he drinks from the waters of Marah. With the *doctor*, it is sometimes the case that he finds it impossible to collect from his debtors what he has justly earned in his practice, and he is thereby unable to support himself and family. Here he drinks from the waters of Marah. With the *politician*, it is often the case that some political upheaval proves his disaster and he is left to grief and woe. Here he drinks from the waters of Marah. In *domestics*, it is often the case that the house-mistress and servant cannot agree, or the husband fails to be a proper provider for his household, and there is confusion and poverty, or it may be that a single child of the family by disobedience pulls a veil of melancholy over the entire family and buries them in the lowest depth of shame and disgrace—here is a well deep as hell and bitter as death.

3d. *God has provided a remedy for our sorrows.*—While the children of Israel murmured Moses cried unto God, and he showed him a tree that stood near

by which when applied made the waters sweet. So has he prepared a deliverance for us.

Notice, God did not take away the waters but something was applied to make them sweet. Neither does he take away our sorrows, but gives us grace to help us on in every time of need. In the day of adversity let us cry unto God, "And a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord." "There shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness." With these promises let me say to the Church of Christ:

"The Lord can clear the darkest skies,
And give us day for night :
Make drops of sacred sorrow rise
To rivers of delight."

Then, in the midst of tribulations and distresses, let us sing:

"Arise my soul from deep distress,
And banish every fear ;
He calls thee to his throne of grace
To spread thy sorrows there."

SERMON XXXIX.*

THE PHILOSOPHY OF MAN'S EXISTENCE.

For in him we live, and move, and have our being ; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.—ACTS XVII : 28.

OUR Lord told his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. They were not to walk the paved streets of Jerusalem simply, or to throng the gorgeous halls of proud Rome, but the command implies that they were to go into *all the world*, entering the proud cities where polytheism and classic mythology were towering, as it were, almost to the heavens, and scatter their powers to the winds and lay their proudest temples in the dust.

The apostles, as faithful heralds of the bloody cross of our dear Redeemer, went forth in the discharge of their duty, giving increase to the government which Isaiah had long before said should have no end. Paul (then known as Saul) fought against this faith with the bloody sword of vengeance, but his end had been appointed by God, so while he traveled toward Damascus, having in his body a heart black with sin and at his side a sword of ven-

* This sermon was delivered by your humble servant by request before the members and congregation of Union St., M. E. Church, Petersburg, Va., June 7, 1885.

geance, to persecute the servants of the living God, that eye that never slumbers saw him, and that ear which is never deaf to sound heard his ambitious feet upon that awful tramp, and that hand which had been nailed to the cross was laid on him, and that power which struck the hearts of the Pentecostal converts seized him, and that sympathetic voice which called fishing Peter from the sea called him: "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" *Awful interrogation!* And in conviction he fell humiliated to the ground, and asked his Master what would he have him do? and is thus sent forth to join the company of Christian martyrs, who were on their way to suffer and die for Jesus.

This is he that stands here to-day in the midst of wise (yet ignorant) men on Mars Hill, in the City of Athens, and calls upon them to lift up their heads toward Calvary, and learn of him who is of a meek and lowly mind, that says of himself: "*I am the light of the world.*"

Before his view lies Athens, in no less splendor than in the days of the great Pericles. Here philosophers wrapped their mantles around them. walked the groves of that magnificent city and unfolded wisdom to their followers, which led them to honor polytheism as their religion, and Grecian culture and art as the acme of all *earthly joy*. To arrest them in their mad career he comes, and to

point them to a true and living God, whom they ignorantly worshipped, and upon whom their very *existence depended*. Therefore, in the language of the text, he plainly elucidates the philosophy of man's existence and scatters to the winds the theory of polytheism.

I. *In him we live.*

The apostle here strikes the key-note of our existence. This brings us to the origin of man quite different from the theory of Ingersoll, and draws a powerful contrast between the ignorance of Bob Ingersoll and the wisdom of the apostle Paul. God's servant has it right; man must first live, then he has his being. This is the Bible doctrine, and the only doctrine that teaches us anything true about nature. "The world, by wisdom, knows not God," and therefore knows not man. The Bible teaches us that God made man and gave him the breath of life, away back on the first pages, and away here crossing the lapse of over four thousand years it speaks and says that the man that was made *lives in the God that made him*.

What a profound thought! How many bright monuments of architectural skill can be now seen standing as the labors of men's hands who now sleep in the grave. The makers and builders of them once lived but are now dead, and their work left to dilapidation and ruin, while they in a few

years are ever forgotten. But, looking back into the genealogy of man, the workmanship of God's hand, we find a standing record which points us to the foundation-stone of his existence; that shows his Creator, not as a man who once lived and is now dead, but in whom he yet lives.

Sad thought, that man should live in a God whom he sought and did not find. But who is this man Paul? A man of Tarsus, well versed in all the Jewish science, who had once been a disciple of the faith he now denounces; therefore, as he stands and gazes upon the fields of heathenism, thickly inhabited by earthly gods, he is overwhelmed by deep and anxious meditation, which caused his heart to heave an ocean-tide of feeling for the salvation of their benighted souls. Around him stood their exalted temples, crowned with vain glory, dedicated to classic mythology, about the centre of which stood their idolatrous altar, which bore on its black face the melancholy inscription, "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD." And he, with the authority of a God-sent orator and the penetrating voice of an inspired apostle, stands up in the midst of these synagogues of Grecian culture and proud philosophy, and summons the mighty men to give ear to the gospel which tells of a known God whom men in wisdom worship. "Him I declare unto you in whom we live and have our being." The apostle here, in mak-

ing known the preservation of man, shows the highest source of joy that ever attended the human heart, in that he shows that man occupies the most lofty seat in the chamber of the divine providence. “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

II. *In whom we move and have our being.*—What a glorious thought, that sinful man should move in God. Here we fall back on the purposes of God the Father, when he laid the foundation of the earth, which he purposed to carry into effect through the endless years of eternity. Here he moves towards the accomplishment of those plans. However far man goes on the road of prosperity, however high he climbs the ladder of literature, however deep he dives into the ocean of science, however high he ascends in philosophy, he has only made a step in the purposes of God. All the advancement the world has ever made has only moved it but a hair's breadth towards the unapproachable end of God's immutable purposes.

Again, it is quite a wonderful thing to know that God is sufficiently large and infinite for all men in all worlds, and all angels in all heavens, and all things in all creations, to move in him and find latitude and duration. What a God is our God! Beside him there is no other.

The apprentice boy enters the workshop with no knowledge of his desired trade, but in a few years walks out—why? because he has gone to the end of his instructor's ability, and there is no further room for him. The student enters the class-room undoubtedly ignorant of his alphabet, but by and by, after a few years' struggle, in his teacher's mind, he reaches the end and is thus set free. Here he stands on the highway of liberty, the equal of his once honored teacher, to take part with him in the drama of life. Not so with God, for with him man is always a school-boy, moving in him and yet never can approximate him. The world is as much a youth to-day, in wisdom, as it was in the days of its infancy. In the fields of God's boundless wisdom the treasures of knowledge lie deep, like the mineral deposits in the bowels of the earth, and as the mighty men of science plow their way and dig for deeper researches of knowledge, scientific and philosophical, discoveries, mechanical and electrical inventions, which are prompted as the proud boast of the age, they only move toward the boundary lines and pluck a flower here and there, like the boy that gathers a few pebbles on the sandy beach of the mighty ocean. It is a philosophical fact, universally acknowledged, that the further man advances in knowledge the more he realizes his subordination to God, and the more eager he becomes to learn more of him, and

when he lies down to die he reflects on the past, gazes toward the future and wonders to himself why has he been contaminated all his life with the world's problems, and has not mastered them, but they have mastered him, and with a trembling voice and freezing tears settling in his fast decaying eyes, he begs death to stay his heavy hand and let him make another blow. Queen Elizabeth said on her death-bed that she was willing to give her empire for just one hour more in this world.

Tom Payne, the noted infidel, on his death-bed cried out, "remorse! remorse!" Alexander the Great, the conqueror of all the civilized world, in the hour of death, so unwilling for his dominion to cease, said: "Give my kingdom to the strong."

Gen. Grant, to-day, while fast decaying in body and mind, looking back on his past record, adorned with bloody victories of the battle-field, and achievements in public sentiment, is shaking the scientific world with his high and undying aspiration and unconquerable power of will to place his name in the front rank of authors, after having won the honors of conqueror and statesman.

Thus the more man achieves the more he wants to achieve, because he feels that nothing as yet has been achieved.

III. *As certain of your poets have said.*—The Epicureans and Stoics said that it was the setting

forth of a strange god that aroused their curiosity, therefore they made strange of it and called upon the mighty man of God to make plain unto them the mystery of that philosophy respecting that God, and how it was that he had learned of a God of whom they had not learned. The apostle lets them know that the God of whom he spoke was not, as they might suppose, a petty god like those standing on their fields made by mortal hands, that had just come into being, of which the world had never before heard, but an ever-living God whose being is known only to himself, of whom their poetic fathers, as witnesses to his doctrine, had long before spoken. Paul, in making a display of his godly knowledge, shows them up in their ignorance, in that they seemed to have but little knowledge of what their great men, the founders of their faith, had said.

The apostle here refers to three of the most distinguished men of antiquity, *viz.*, Aratus, the Greek poet of Celicia; Zeno, the founder of the Stoics, and Cleanthes, his successor, and quotes here the sentiment of the latter and the exact phraseology of the former. Here he evinced an extraordinary knowledge of the classical writings, which shows God to be the source of every being of which they were indirectly conscious.

IV. *For we are his offspring.*—Now the apostle brings us to meditate on the most profound of all

thoughts, by knocking down the many false theories advanced respecting man's origin, and pointing the world to God, whose going forth is from the ends of the heavens, and whose dominion has no end. Man's being is the strongest evidence of God's being; we must admit the being of the latter before we can account for the existence of the former. He who would leave God out in accounting for the origin of man, would leave out the sun in accounting for day. We must admit man to be the workmanship of God's hands from the simple fact that he is dependent on God for his existence; he is a machinery over which no other hand has control; as a mystery he is too great for human intellect to master.

The greatest minds of medical science in all ages have found him to be the subject for commentation, that cannot be understood with their most keen perception and profound understanding. God alone runs this machine, and when he would say *stop!* there is none to say go. The poet finds his field of labor in the boundary of this great mystery; he sweetens the air with the golden strains of his commentations; he pleases the ear and gladdens the heart with his music; he makes humanity feel proud of herself in vanity

He brings new lustre again and again to our sight,
And carries our souls away into oceans of delight.

His every action of thought only deepens self-

admiration, which brings man to know his kinsmanship to God; and then, alas! alas! when he has led us to a greater expectation, only says, "Man is wonderfully made;" here he leaves us to butt the mystery as a ram butting a stone wall, or trying to reach its zenith as a sparrow vainly strives to soar to the stars.

Again, my dear friends, it may appear to you a voyage of discovery to conceive that every faculty of the human mind finds its consummation in the Almighty God, which proves beyond a reasonable doubt that we can be but his offspring. The Bible teaches us that we are made in the image of God. Pray, tell me what is this image but those inherited qualities which make man superior to all other animals, or (in other words) a rational being? There *is the intellect*, the organ of knowledge, which premeditates and investigates on the store-house of wisdom and nature, and makes great and wonderful discoveries annually, which leads man a little higher up in the presence of God, and shows his similitude and kinsmanship to some great self-existing, omnipotent being, who made all things by the word of his power. What is this great faculty but the mark of God on man, stamped on him indelibly, which lies deep in his very make-up and shows a part of the image of his Maker?

There is conscience.—In this we have the sense of

right, the very organ of law, which teaches us our obligation to God and our fellow-man. Man knows right from wrong and how to do right. What is this great faculty but a highway which leads us back to our origin in him whose unchangeable character must ever remain the true standard of right?

There is the æsthetic faculty.—This is an attribute of taste which controls man's affections in this beautiful world, the outgrowth of God's architectural skill. It controls his mind and governs his will, and enables him to love and honor his Creator. What can this be but the mark of God, by which he is everlastingly branded, which shows his relationship to him who is all beauty and grandeur?

There is his will-power, which governs his choice and makes him master of his own desire, gives him ability and makes him judge between polytheism and the very God that made him, and is therefore the pivot on which he turns his every action. His present, or even his future state, is just what he wills it. If it be his will to believe on Jesus and accept salvation, he will, when done with this world, live with God; but if he wills himself away to Satan in darkness, he shall be bound hand and foot and cast in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth. What is this great faculty but a gateway to him, that at whose will worlds move, and planets rotate with an ever-

lasting velocity, and who owns man as his offspring?

There is also his power of imagination, which gives him reflection on the past, an insight into the future, and enables him to fancy the very appearance of things unknown to existence, and awakens in his mind and heart a like or dislike for that which has been or is yet to be.

On this power the historian rides in recording events, and the Bible reader looks into the world of peace beyond a vale of tears, and brightens his prospect for heaven and immortal glory, or darkens his sight on the horrible picture of the agonies of the second death and eternal destruction. What is this but a trace of God's immutable nature, which he transmitted to man, his creature, whom he declares is made in his own image and is his offspring? We might trace this argument further, and we would only find down the whole line of man's attributes items of God here and there, mixed and interwoven into the organ of his frame, as evidence of his being the offspring of God.

Conclusion.—It is a grand thing to be in God, but a grander thing to *know* that you are in him. He who is in God is truly in a grand position; but he who *knows* that he is in God is possessed of the highest grandeur to which mortal is heir. To be in God is one thing, and to know and enjoy it is another. The Christian's life is hid with Christ in God.

“Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on his gentle breast.”

Safe in the rock that is higher than the height above, or deeper than the depth below Do you know for yourselves that you are in God? if so, it is well with your souls.

SERMON XL.*

THE FUTURE HOPE OF THE NEGRO.

Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.—PSALM XLV : 16.

DEAR Christian friends, I have come to harass your minds on the subject of much meditation respecting the future hope of the Negro.

His origin, ability, and future hope have arrested the thoughts of the best thinkers and the most learned for over four hundred years, and he is now about to be set aside by many of them on the acknowledgment that he is a rational creature, but stands outside of Adam's posterity, and therefore his origin is hid in obscurity.

Such a statement, if true, would reflect upon the character of God, but being a base fabrication only shows men up in their ignorance; for the Scriptures teach us that God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and

* This sermon was preached by your humble servant before the graduating class of the Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute, Petersburg, Va., May 29th, 1887.

hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.*

This emphatic declaration brings along with it an established proof beyond the possibility of a doubt that the Negro is a direct descendant of Adam, and blows asunder the many false theories which have been uttered by the mouths of liars. Hence let us notice:

I. *The text is prophetic of the future greatness of the Egyptians or Negroes*, which is fully seen in that it is representative of Solomon's marriage to the Egyptian Queen.

I am fully conscious of the fact that when I call the Egyptians Negroes, I invade a field on which many theoretic and historical battles have been fought, but I appear as a bold soldier in the defense of those whom I love, whose origin, success, and greatness I intend to prove, not by the theories of tradition but by the word of God, which is irrevocable and infallible.

Let us start with Ham, the youngest son of Noah. Noah had three sons, who were preserved from the great deluge of the flood, Ham, Shem, and Japheth. Previous to the flood Noah was a good man, "yes, a perfect man;" says the Scripture—"he was a preacher of righteousness an hundred and twenty years." After all the creatures of the world were

* Acts xvii : 26.

destroyed by the flood except Noah, his wife, and his three sons and their wives, we do not hear of him preaching any more, but the Scripture tells us that he, "began to be a husbandman, and he planted a vineyard. And he drank of the wine, and was drunken, and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both of their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him. And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren."* Before we proceed to show the division of the human family, I wish to show that the Negroes have not been cursed by reason of Ham's conduct toward Noah, his father.

I claim that Noah's words are not prophetic, or that they have no divine origin. A prophesy is a predicted declaration entitled to future fulfillment. A prophet, properly speaking, is one who divinely foretells events. A prophet is an inspired man; and inspiration is of God only. You will remember that Noah had just awaked from drunkenness; his mind

* Genesis ix : 20, 25.

was not clear from intoxicating influences, and was therefore in no inspired attitude. He has now vacated the office of a preacher of righteousness, and is gone about the things of the world. The old man might have been godly inclined—*i.e.*, he may not have forsaken God; but having descended into the degraded state of drunkenness and been made mock of by Ham, his own son, he was at once thrown into a fit of passion and merely spoke against Ham's son Canaan, in a way of reprimanding him.

Now we are ready to frankly admit with others that Ham is the progenitor of the Negro race, but we do not agree that he was cursed of God, by reason of which his posterity was made slaves. Let us not tarry here; the point we desire to declare with proof is that the Egyptians were Negroes.

In the eleventh chapter of Genesis we read that because of the wickedness of the people after the flood in attempting to ascend into heaven by temporal skill, God confounded their language. Before this we read in the first verse of the same chapter: "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech;" which implies that there was but one nationality, which implication is given us in plain words in the sixth verse: "And the Lord said, Behold the people is one, and they have all one language." After the confusion of tongues there was a division in the human family by the separation of

the sons of Noah and their families. They were scattered abroad all over the face of the earth; and each nation or people received its complexion from the climate in which it was situated.

Ham had four sons * who peopled Africa and a part of Asia.†

David, in speaking of the wrath of God on the Egyptians in smiting their first-born, says: "And smote all the first-born in Egypt; the chief of their strength in the tabernacles of Ham;" ‡ and again when speaking of Jacob's coming into Egypt, says: "Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham." §

II. *Instead of the Negro fathers shall be the Negro children as governors.*—It has been said that the Negro possesses no governing qualities, that he is adapted only to rail-malling, new-ground-hoeing, cleaning spittoons and water drawing, and he can be only fitted for such positions, and that any attempt to qualify him for higher vocations is only time and money spent in vain; but looking back into the record of our forefathers we find that there is no calling too great or attainment too high for him to soar to its very zenith. Beginning with the Egyptians let us walk up the road of greatness and count a few of the Negro's tracks made deep in

* Gen. x : 6.

† See Dr. Jones (W.) Bib. Cyclopedia.

‡ Ps. lxxviii : 51.

§ Ps. cv : 23.

the sands of notability and fame. To the Egyptians the world is indebted for the wisdom of that grand God-fearing law-giver and Hebrew deliverer, Moses; he was educated in all the wisdom of Egypt (and I may say the world) by Pharoah, a Negro king. Moses was a man whose wisdom was deep and whose judgment was profound in the knowledge of God; in wisdom he was an Egyptian while in nationality he was a Hebrew.

There is Manetho, an Egyptian priest, in whose veins flowed none other but Negro blood, who has given the world a history containing the greatest facts of antiquity.

There is Hannibal, the renowned Carthaginian, whom I may properly style the lion of war, who lived as late as about two hundred years before Christ. He ascended the snowy Alps, and went beyond its icy peaks, and laid waste the Roman power, confronting him in battle array.

There are men who have played active parts in this government whom I will leave to your knowledge of modern history to know.

Egyptian women stood as high in society as any other women of the world.

Moses, the great law dispensator, married an Egyptian woman. Solomon, on whose brow was seen the blossoms of wisdom, the wisest man of all men that ever lived, married an Egyptian woman,

by virtue of which she was made queen of his rich, great, and wonderful dominion.

Their government.—In this they were first, and it was one of which we need not be ashamed. They laid the foundation on which all other nations of civilization have built. Their government was a live monarchy, hereditary in its nature, which found its origin away back as far as the second dynasty, about three thousand years before the advent of Christ, which was run on a religious basis; the king's judgment was not an unquestionable decree; it was governed by the priestly order, which was a religious power behind the throne controlling all civil affairs. Their executive body consisted of judges who held full sway in all administrations of law, who saw that justice was given to every man and all criminals duly punished.*

Their *sciences* consisted of much knowledge in geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and medicine—in fact we may say that science had its origin among the Egyptians.

Their scientific knowledge was profound and deep, for they gave the world a pattern which has been gladly received. Swinton says that the great philosopher, Pythagoras, learned from the Egyptian priests the fact that the square of the hypotenuse is equal to the sum of the square of the two other

* "Britannica Encyclopedia," Vol. 7, page 624.

sides. For their commendable knowledge of *arts* I need only to refer you to their great and lasting temples and pyramids, which have not been surpassed by any nation or people.

With the fore-gone statements what shall we say about the Egyptians? They are the beginners of civilization, the founders of governments, all nations' leaders in wisdom, and the best of all our fathers from whom we hold inherited principles of greatness which give us claims on the future leadership of this country in government, education and high morals; let us demand it by reason of right and take it by contest.

Men would fain rob us of our great inherited heirship if they could, and put our origin outside of the human family; but our God has laid the foundation too sure to be shaken, our fathers have planted their greatness too firm to be moved or erased;—therefore we stand to-day wearing the crown of many stars, which cannot be taken away by dishonest men nor howling devils. So while we stand in fear, wondering to ourselves if we shall ever stand in the front ranks where our forefathers stood,—knowing we have been slaves and down-trodden, God speaks, whose words are laws, to the nations of the earth, and says:

“Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth.”

This gives the young men of to-day to know that they are to hold positions of grandeur, and upon their shoulders hangs the responsibility of the future hope of this country. We are not to fail, as some say, but we must succeed. Nowadays a great man cannot fall but the world keeps a great clamoring about his departure, and many run about expressing great sorrow for the nation, crying, the country's Moses has fallen and there is none to take his place, and we all must suffer great loss. But soon and very soon God's prepared Joshua, walks out of secret into public, and divides the Jordan of the nation's coming difficulties, and leads the people over on yonder side into the promised land to pluck the ripe fruits of greater prosperity.

This is what every wise man can see in Providence in reading the future, while the short-sighted sinner doubts and cries, "Everything is a failure."

When Rev. Henry Ward Beecher was told that Vice President Hendricks was dead, he replied; "I am sorry for the family." "Are you not sorry for the country?" asked the reporter. "No," replied Beecher.

Mr. Beecher's Biblical knowledge taught him to know that the coming sons of this country would stand in the old man's stead, and that the government would not suffer loss, but the family might.

Elijah was taken from the Israelites in the dark-

est days of spiritual declension, when it was thought that none but he could divide the Jordan; but as he surmounted the fiery chariot and rode away above the skies, God disrobed him of his mantle and threw it on Elisha, and the dashing waves of Jordan could still be divided, though he was gone. Just see, an humble farmer was called from the plow-handles to fill the stead of such a great man. So with the young men of to-day,—they are to rise from mediocrity to stand in the shoes of their fathers and be men of eminent ability to lead the nation on from triumph to greater triumph.

“God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.”

III. *They shall stand in their stead religiously.*

Here many would say, “Tell us more of the Negro’s future hope and possibilities.” Having shown that the Negro is Adam’s posterity, and that he has not been cursed of God; I now claim that the human family is an unbroken unit, and that all mankind is of one common brotherhood. In the future the word Negro will be but seldom found in the pages of history, and whenever used in history or verbal conversation it will be used with great pride and renown. It is of no divine origin; it is derived from the Latin *niger*, which simply means BLACK, and that cannot be a mark of dishonor nor inferiority; and as descent is not indispensable to

any race or people, the Negro in coming years will stand so very high in distinction that his color will never be thought of but with honor. The black man has as great a part in this government as the white man; we all stand equal in the sight of God; we stand equal at the bar, and equal at the ballot-box.

We are not responsible for our previous condition; we were brought here from our mother-land, not because we desired to come but because the white man needed our assistance and brought us; now we are here and we will play our part in the drama of life side by side with him.

George Washington is the father of this country; well, he is our father too. Ulysses S. Grant is the country's great warrior, and he is our warrior too. Therefore we are to stand in the stead of our fathers, not as sons restricted to race lines, but as sons of the human family. We speak of Daniel not as a Hebrew, but as a servant of God; we speak of Christ not as a Jew, but as the world's Redeemer; and the day will come and is now, when the Negroes must stand as men in every relation of life to be spoken of as citizens of great distinction and renown. The mountains of race-prejudices will pass away as culture arises. And *true* culture is found alone in the religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

A nation or a people will ascend the ladder of

civilization to the extent that God is obeyed. "Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

God does not make men to be thieves, drunkards and liars, but heirs to righteousness.

The children are to stand in their father's shoes to be princes, supporters of truth and workers of righteousness, and not immoral monsters.

Young men, upon us is encumbered the responsibility to fill the Lord's house. How are we to do it? By living godly lives and letting our lights shine. We are responsible for more than our fathers were, for our privileges far exceed theirs. Men are to be made better and stronger by our lives and society is to be built up by our labors. Just listen to the command of the king, that falls on our ears like thunder, which must be obeyed: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations." Around us are waste fields which must be built up to the glory of God, which is ours to do. Across the ocean lies the dark benighted land, Africa, inhabited by over two hundred millions souls, whose voices are daily heard crying: "Come and help us."

Our fathers are fallen and we are standing in their shoes, and the staff of the bloody flag of our dear Redeemer is handed over to us. Will we suffer the flag to trail in the dust? God forbid! They at the orders of the King have put down the cross,

which we have taken up, and let us carry it with joy
They have thrown off their mantles, which have
fallen on us, and let us use them to great advantage.

“ Jesus, I my cross have taken,
All to leave, and follow thee ;
Naked, poor, despised, forsaken,
Thou from hence my all shall be.”

False prophets have said that ours will be a sad failure; but God has placed us here, and if we trust in him, we shall stand.

“ How can I sink with such a prop
As my eternal God;
Who bears the earth’s huge pillars up,
And spreads the heavens abroad ?”

Men and brethren, this is the 19th century, an age of the greatest culture and art.

Our responsibilities are greater than our fathers, because the demands of the times are greater.

The present age calls for men of moral courage, pure hearts, and honest deportments, who are ever ready to combat evil, tear down falsehood and support truth and righteousness. Men who are ever ready and willing to bend their energies to trash, and throw their stigmas at the Christians, and ignore the church of Christ, and delight themselves in being infidels and atheists, are unfit to be leaders of the people; and upon every such man should be set this

inscription, in the most conspicuous place of his person, A FOOL TO FAIL.

In every profession of life we need Moseses, Joshuas, Johns, Pauls, and Peters. Men who will stand all for right and none for wrong, and are willing to suffer and give their lives if need be for the cause. Again, the present generation is too willing to get away from the old landmark. There is too much setting aside of the old-time religion. The young people are leaving the paths in which their mothers and fathers trod to glory, and crying to the air and the prince of darkness, "*Show us new paths to heaven.*" Many find new paths which lead them to the Doubting Castle, in the arms of the Giant Despair. "Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein and ye shall find rest for your souls."

Then let us abide in the old paths that our souls may be fat, the kingdom of Christ extended and God glorified.

If a young man would succeed at all he must do it in the fear of the Lord. David says that a young man is to cleanse his way by "taking heed thereto according to the word of God." The day has been when a Christian persecutor was more highly esteemed than a Christian believer, but that day is gone and will never return.

Nowadays to be a gentleman is to be a Christian. The world is calling for Moseses and not Neroes.

The nations want their leaders to stand on the "Delectable Mountain."

Ingersoll is treated with less respect than Tom Payne was, and the day will soon come when to be an infidel will be to be a straight-out fool; and there will be no attention paid, at all, to infidel clamors.

Ingersoll the other day, with all of his dramatic eloquence, in defending the case of Chas. B. Reynolds in the court of New Jersey for blasphemy, was ignored, and the man whom he sought to defend was condemned. Judge Childs, in charging the jury, said that, "It is blasphemous to attack religion in a way to wound the feeling of Christians—blasphemous to scoff at the Holy Ghost, or to ridicule those things considered holy." This declaration makes every infidel a criminal guilty of blasphemy.

The religion of Jesus Christ has succeeded and ever will triumph. It is the nation's only safeguard, that passeth all understanding. It makes a man a new creature, regulates his inward and outward life by giving him a sacred treasure of new ideas founded in a pure heart, in harmony with all the requirements of everlasting life, and makes him an heir to all the commonwealth of Israel. It has led the world to a wonderful reformation and is leading it

to a greater still, for the battle-fields of transgression have become the harvest fields of our Lord.

“Jesus shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run ;
His kingdom stretch from shore to shore
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.”

SERMON XLI.

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY.

For every man shall bear his own burden.—GAL. VI : 5.

THE epistle from which I take my text this morning, beloved brethren, was written by the apostle Paul to the Galatians; a people who in former years (280 B.C.) migrated from Gaul and settled in a large district in Asia Minor, which from thence was called Galatia; among whom the apostle travelled* and planted Christianity about A.D. 50.

It appears to be a fact supported by positive evidence that their religion previous to their conversion to the Christian faith was exceedingly corrupt and superstitious.

Some time after the apostle left them some Judaizing teachers came among them and introduced their ceremonial observances, which were causing many to apostatize from the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. This necessitated the writing of this epistle.

He reproves them for having departed from the gospel which he preached, and going about vainly trying to establish their own righteousness, and

* Acts xvi : 6.—xviii : 23.

gives them to know that it was impossible for them to be saved by the righteousness of the law, but by grace. After giving them various instructions, he, in conclusion, gives them a strong exhortation for their Christian conduct, especially concerning a proper use of their Christian freedom.

The chapter from which we have taken our text seems to set forth individual duty and responsibility, that no one might feel himself excusable on the faith and good works of his neighbor, but every one might know that he must appear in the judgment before Almighty God individually responsible, bearing his own burden.

Without perfect understanding one might regard the second and fifth verses as being conflicting statements; hence it would be well for me here to give a brief explanation.

The second verse reads thus: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ," which means bear with one another's infirmities, and help to support one another under each other's burdens, which is plainly brought out in these words: "Warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men." *—This verse is an exhortation on Christian charity, while the fifth verse is an exhortation on individual responsibility, with which we purpose

* *Thess. v* : 14.

to deal explanatorily in this discourse. Desiring to bring out the true philosophy of the text, dear hearers, I would ask you to let us notice :

I. *Civil individual responsibility.*

Civil government can only approximate perfection to the extent that civil law makers become acquainted with divine government, for apart from divine law there neither is nor can be any civil law. Out of our relations to God grow our relations to our fellow-man. Ethics knows no basis save the law of God. Here we are enabled to account for the great truth which is the foundation-stone to the American Constitution that, "all men are equally created and endowed with inalienable rights."

Ethics does not destroy individual responsibility in civil government any more than the mercy of God destroys individual responsibility in divine government, for one is as much the will of God as the other. Equal citizenship bespeaks equal responsibility. The very fact that one is enjoyed implies that the other must be borne, for he that enjoys the rights, privileges and protection of his government is called upon to endure equal responsibility

Every statute of law in the United States government calls upon each and every State to bear her own burden, and every statute of law in each and every State calls upon each and every citizen in an unalterable tone of voice to bear his own burden.

In the last civil war struggle, when the peace of the nation was disturbed by domestic rebellion, there was not a State in the union but what was made to bear her equal part in the grievous conflict. Neither was there a single man in the reach of the law but was called upon and made to bear his own burden.

Concentrating our thoughts to a more personal centre, let us not be insensible to the great and blessed truth that there is not a single statute in all the American laws that in the persecution of crime calls upon one man to bear the burden of another.

Mr. Johns, the once heathenized but now civilized African, who lectured to you a few weeks ago, said, that in Africa the king of a heathen tribe is not held responsible for his criminal deeds: his words are laws irrespective of crime or condemnation, and when he dies many of his subjects are slain and his grave lined with their dead bodies, in carrying out the superstitious notion tolerated among them that the king should not bear the burden of death for himself neither be buried alone. No spirit of such a vicious practice is found in this our country, for every man from the President to the peasant must bear his own burden even unto death.

President Andrew Johnson, in 1868, upon mere suspicion of crime in the uncertainty of the true interpretation of the law, was indicted by Congress

and tried by the American laws for "high crimes and misdemeanors." He was enabled, however, to establish his innocency and escape condemnation, but the indictment stands upon record in the American law-books as a living evidence of the fact to coming generations that one of the fundamental principles of the American laws in citizenship is individual responsibility, and that the greatest and noblest man of the land is as much susceptible to trial and punishment on the committal of crime as the poorest and smallest.

Senator ——, a man famous in Virginia as a politician and statesman, was indicted, condemned and imprisoned at Woodstock, Va , Aug., 12, 1887, for lack of due respect for the judge of the court; he a law-maker thus suffers the penalty of the law which he helped to enact.

Furthermore, men are not only responsible for what they do and say to bear their burden of punishment, but each and every citizen is called upon to bear an equal portion in the support of his government and the protection of his country. While the government owes him equal rights and protection, he owes the government life-lasting allegiance.

II. *Religious individual responsibility.*—If as above stated be true in relation to civil government, where nobility stands out against peasantry, where justice under true intentions, by reason of fraud and

prejudice, is oftentimes accidentally gotten, what can we think and say about individual responsibility in ecclesiastical affairs, when God declares himself to be no respecter of persons ?

We must expect for justice to plumb the line, and every man appear before the judgment-seat of Christ individually responsible and individually charged according as his works shall be, whether they be good or bad.

Notice, the wording of the text, "Every man shall bear his own burden," is a positive declaration.

1. *Burden of false belief.*—One thing at which the apostle aimed in his letter to the Galatians, desiring to strike a death-blow, was false religion introduced among the Galatian Christians by the Judaizing teachers after his departure from them, which had caused many to apostatize from the true faith and go about trying to establish a righteousness unto themselves.

He would have them know that God, whose eye never slumbers, saw them, understood them and knew them, and that he would in the latter day call each and every one to account for his false belief. We have no little of this to contend with in this our day. Men who cannot endure sound doctrine, having itching ears, are going about heaping up unto themselves false teachers. False teachers are springing up in our midst, dressed in sheep's clothing, but

within are ravening wolves, saying here is Christ or there is Christ, drawing after them many from the true faith. These men are given over to the works of iniquity, and their hearts are as black as hell. "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall." Brethren, let none of these things move you, for God says, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." Let us stand firm and unmovable in the liberty and freedom of the faith wherewith he has made us free.

Be not disturbed ye saints of the Lord,
God will sustain us if we trust in his word.

2. *Burden of falsehood.*—Falsehood is another point to which centres the apostle's aim, for those who had departed from the faith were vicious liars, having professed to be followers of the Lord but had returned to their ways of folly, and their second state was worse than the first. "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly."*

Falsehood is one of the leading evils with which we have to contend in this our day—men lying to God, which is a serious and dangerous thing. Last year a young woman was received into this church for baptism, claiming to have professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; she testified before God to the church and officials that baptism was her faith, and that she intended to live and die a Baptist; but the other day, she apostatized from the faith.

* Prov. xxvi: 11.

There was a man received into the membership of this church the other day from the Methodist Church for baptism, declaring his belief in the Son of God and desiring to be baptized.

Where is he now? He has wandered from the faith.

The unclean spirit might have departed from them, but remained only a short season. He soon returned and brought with him seven spirits more wicked than himself, and seems to have taken entire possession of them;* for he who can soon forget his vow to God must be actuated by a combination of wicked spirits. They have not only lied to the church but they have lied to God; upon their own shoulders rests the responsibility of guilt, and like Ananias and Sapphira, who came to God with a lie upon their lips, without repentance they shall perish.

“For every man shall bear his own burden.”

3. *Burden of self-righteousness.*—Moreover, the apostle in this epistle to the Galatians was not insensible to the fact that self-pride had taken the uppermost seat in many of their hearts, causing them to think themselves something when they were nothing.

This seems to be the fundamental cause of all back-sliding; “for if a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing he deceiveth him-

* Matt. xii : 43-45.

self." This makes deception the action of our own hearts. For he that thinketh himself something is sure to be deceived in himself. No sooner do we think ourselves something than the sight of all things else is lost in beholding self.

Self becomes the primary object of attraction, and the heart grows proud and vicious; a scornful look is then seen upon the face and in the eye, and the sinful mortal turns his nose up against his fellow man and looks around and begins to seek

Popularity, notoriety and fame,
But is sooner lost in shame.

III. *Individual church responsibilities.*

Before we can understandingly treat this part of our discourse we must define the word Church. The word Church as defined by theologians is a congregation of baptized believers, covenanting to do what Christ has commanded. It is singular in form notwithstanding it conveys a plural idea. This makes it necessary that we should treat this division of our discourse under two general heads—first, collective church burdens; second, individual church burdens.

1. *Collective church burdens.*—Each Church is an independent body in itself, owning Christ for its head; therefore each church is collectively responsible to God for its actions. This many churches

seem to forget, for too often it is the case that disobedient parties escape discipline when their disobedience comes under immediate notice. No member should be allowed in disobedience to escape church discipline, for there is a responsibility resting upon the Church for the spiritual care of those committed to its charge

The cause of the slackness in church discipline is often to be accounted for in the neglect of the officials to bring the transgression of the transgressors to the knowledge of the Church. These things, dear brethren, ought not so to be, for the Church is collectively responsible to God for the spiritual watch-care of its members, and there is nothing that appertains to their spiritual welfare and development that should be overlooked or neglected. *Again*, each Church must bear its own burden in laboring for the salvation of sinners, for Christ has said, "ye are the salt of the earth." Every Church's mission is strictly spiritual, and from its midst should be seen daily flowing living streams of good morals and spiritual virtues: all of its services should be strictly spiritual, and each and every member should participate therein with a fullness of soul. If this were the true state of affairs, sinners would be constantly inquiring, "Men and brethren, what shall I do to be saved?"

2. *Individual church burdens.*—Some burdens do

not concern the Church collectively but individually: The word member means a part of a whole: hence we see that our very name bespeaks our relation to the Church. Each and every member is a part of the Church and is therefore responsible to the Church and to God individually for obedience and fidelity. This it seems that members too often forget, for if they were truly sensible to the position they hold in the Church and their individual responsibility, I don't think it would so often occur that they try to hide behind one another in shirking the duties that sternly and positively stare them in the face.

The Church is not responsible for the individual duties of members, neither can it individually perform for them.

The Church can strive to lead its members to repentance, but it cannot repent for them. It can teach them obedience, but cannot obey for them; neither is it responsible for the repentance and obedience of its members when it has labored to the clear discharge of its duty to save them.

IV. Now, in conclusion, every man shall bear his own burden in the *general judgment*. "Be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap

life everlasting.” In the judgment every one shall be rewarded according as his works shall be, whether they be good or bad.”

There will be no hiding behind neighbor; every one must answer and shall answer for himself. Then the world shall know what the apostle meant when he cried: “The great day of his wrath is come and who shall be able to stand?” For in that day the stars of heaven shall fall and the heaven depart as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island shall be moved out of their places and the kings of the earth and the great men and the rich men and the chief captains with both free and bond shall seek to hide themselves in rocks and mountains, and cry, “rocks and mountains fall on us and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne,” for every man shall bear his own burden.

Then let the hypocrite turn from his wicked way and the sinner from his transgression unto the Lord and live, while there is a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.* This is the accepted year of the Lord, for Christ has died the just for the unjust.

“Haste, O sinner ; now be wise ;
Stay not for the morrow’s sun ;
Wisdom if you still despise,
Harder is it to be won.”

* Zach. xiii : 1.

SERMON XLII.

THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST.

And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.—DANIEL ii: 44.

GOD'S declarations are forcible as well as instructive. They alarm our imagination as well as lift our senses lofty;—too deep is he for our finite perception, too wise is he for our understanding. His wisdom was too great for Nebuchadnezzar; he could not hold in his mind the deposits of high heaven. The instructions of God came to him in a dream by night, but, before day, went away—he was lost for understanding. He called his wise men but none but Daniel, God's servant, could instruct him.

God's wisdom is too deep for man; he alone is the interpreter, that can make it plain. "Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets," was Nebuchadnezzar's reply to Daniel, who was alarmed at the words that fell from his mouth.

Daniel's interpretation of the king's dream sets forth five kingdoms, all of which are represented in this compound image except the last, which is the kingdom of heaven, the kingdom of kingdoms, the greatest of all, which is representative of the Messiah, the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

The first is the Babylonian kingdom, represented in the head of gold, over which Nebuchadnezzar ruled. This kingdom was founded by Nimrod, the grandson of Ham.* It is called by Daniel, Great Babylon.

This vast empire extended from north to south, from the Mesopotamia to the Persian Gulf, and from east to west from the Arabian desert to the Tigris.

Over this great dominion reigned Nebuchadnezzar.

The city of Babylon is said by Herodotus, the father of history, "to have been sixty miles in circumference, having walls eighty-seven feet thick and three hundred and fifty high, on the top of which four horse chariots abreast could pass without collision; twenty-five gates on each side made of brass, and two hundred and fifty towers."

The second kingdom, represented in this image, is the Medo-Persian, which the two arms and breast represent, which was brought into existence by the Medes and Persians, who subdued the Babylonians under the generalship of Cyrus, who diverted the

* Genesis x : 10.

course of the Euphrates. This kingdom was inferior to the Babylonian.

The third kingdom, represented by this image, was the Macedonian, brought into existence by Alexander the Great, which is represented by the belly and thighs. Alexander's dominion extended over Asia, Europe, and Africa. So very great was he in power that it is said by historians that ambassadors came from almost all parts of the world to congratulate him on his success.

The fourth kingdom is the Roman Empire, stronger and larger than any of the rest, represented by the image's legs and feet, part iron and part clay, which was divided into ten lesser kingdoms.

The Romans became great in power; subdued many kingdoms, and brought many nations subject unto them, and when Christ came they were in their highest glory.

In the midst of these kingdoms says Daniel: *The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom.* This was the stone which he saw cut out of the mountain without hands.

“God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform.”

He walks in upon the nations of the earth and establishes his kingdom in a way that man knows

not of. "Great is the mystery of godliness without controversy." No man can tell how came this kingdom into existence. The great theologians of the world have talked and written on the personality of Christ, but none have diagnosed the mystery.

The Apostles exhausted their wisdom on the subject, and at last Paul concluded for himself and all the rest by saying; "we yet see through a glass darkly."

Christ came not with his thousands of warriors, like other kings, but in the volume of the book as it was written of him to do the will of God, saying that he was of a meek and lowly mind. He brought not his kingdom by observation but by invisible workings beyond the comprehension of man, and sat it up in the hearts of men, founded upon himself, the sure foundation, while others were founded on sinking sand; therefore, says Daniel: *It shall never be destroyed.* If you desire to make a structure secure, place it on a sure foundation. "Thus sayeth the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste." *

The kingdom of Christ has had more enemies than any other kingdom and stood stronger resistance

* Is. xxviii : 16.

than any other. "From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence"—and still it has had more friends and succeeded more rapidly than any other kingdom; and to-day more men bow to the sceptre of King Jesus than to all other sceptres of the world.

It has wrestled against principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, and spiritual wickedness in high places. The Jewish democracy and the Roman world united their powers on the advent of Christ.

Herod lifted his sword to slay him in the cradle and the wise men took council against him, and at last in the execution of his crucifixion, the powers of the world were united against him, but in death the victory he gained.

On the third morning he rose from his grave and declared publicly to the world that all power was his, in heaven and in earth; commanded his disciples to establish his kingdom in all the world, and as they travelled through floods and flames success attended their efforts and the kingdom of our Lord prospered, for it could not be destroyed.

It shall not be left to another but shall break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms.—Alexander on his death-bed was asked to whom should his kingdom be given. He replied: "To the strong," to be completed. But Christ under the excruciating

pains of death said: "It is finished." Finished ! yes, it was finished. No more could be done; redemption was complete—"other foundation can no man lay than is laid."

SERMON XLIII.

TRUTH REVEALED AND SIN EXPOSED.

There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid that shall not be known.—MATT. x : 26.

THE text sets forth a two-fold meaning, *viz.*, that truth will be known, and when revealed will expose sin. This being true let us notice:

I. *The necessity of publishing righteousness and transgression.*

History is merely a record of past events, and much of things done in secret, which shows both the righteousness and the transgression of men.

This is highly necessary for the advancement of the nation in civilization.

Men of the present age should be more wise than their fathers who have preceded them, because they have their wisdom on which to build and their mistakes which led to crime to better enable them to shun the path of evil. This is another fact favoring the thought that God rules and governs the world and puts in preservation the actions of men; for if history was left entirely to the will of man he would be fast in recording his goodness, to show his per-

fection to the world, but would never record his mistakes or actions of transgression. "Hide my sins from men, is ever his plea." But God has said: "Be sure your sins will find you out," and when sin has found one out the world knows it and the pages of history are stained with its dye, and there is placed on record a crime for the scorn of the world.

This is necessary because of the horror of sin and the glory of righteousness. The works of Satan must be known as well as the works of God to tell who is the greater. And thanks be to God that these things by him are so arranged; for by this heaven is exalted and hell degraded, God is put above and Satan below. If some men who have lived, but are now dead, could step out of the grave and just read history for themselves, and see what has been put on public record about them in facts, they would undoubtedly sorrow bitterly and say: "Oh! that I could recall the past:" for I have often heard men say while living, "if I could re-live my life I would surely live a better one." "There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed, and hid that shall not be known."

II. *Truth must be known.*

I remember once during my years of farming, that I planted a square in cotton, and on account of drought the seed remained in earth so very long that

I was tempted to re plant the land with another grain, thinking the cotton seed to have rotted; but while I delayed the action the earth was blessed with rain, and in a few days after, to my great surprise, behold, the seed germinated and came forth arrayed with beauty. The seed was good and was only waiting for nature to reveal it, while I doubted. So it is with truth, sometimes delayed and often doubted, but in due time Justice reveals it and it is seen stepping forth in triumph over falsehood.

The disciples may have doubted and anticipated much trouble in making the truth of Christ's kingdom known, because it was a new thing, and new agencies were being employed for its publicity, and it was rejected on every hand, even by those who claimed to be its rightful heirs.

- Therefore Jesus cautions them against doubt and fear, and lets them know that there is a power behind the throne able to make their great commission known and prove his gospel true, and that it would be done even if the children of the kingdom had to be thrown out; he would call forth the nations from North, South, East and West, and give them seats by the side of Abraham. He knew that the truth would be known and polytheism would fall to the ground, idolatry and superstition would perish and the kingdom of our dear Redeemer would be built and established in all the world. This was to be

done through suffering and pain. "Behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves." Christ understood very well the situation of things. On this mission he sends them alone to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, to teach in public what he had taught them in secret, who were his most bitter enemies, that they might be reclaimed. Hardship awaited them on the way, tribulations of every kind thronged their path to keep back the truth.

The devil used his bottom effort to retard Christ's kingdom. He was walking about to and fro throughout the earth; he was prince of darkness and his kingdom was very well established. His teachers were, as they are now, on the field possessed of great boldness, and one to supersede them must show a willingness to suffer for the cause which he represents. Christ says to his disciples, "fear none of these things," for they have only the power to kill the body; the truth must be known.

Their fighting was not in vain; they sowed the seed of truth in blood, and even in these times it is coming forth with much fruit to the honor and glory of God our Father. What was sown in secret is now known, even to things done in heaven in council respecting man's redemption.

Truth cannot be hid. I was walking a few days ago on the street in company with one of my deacons, and was met by a little girl that came

along singing like a lark. Her countenance looked bright and she appeared happy. I said to the deacon, "that child is reared in a good family, for she knows what liberty is." The parents of that child had cared for her and were kind to her in secret, and in her face the truth was read on the public street. The same is true on the other hand. Show me a child that is treated in the domestic circle like a dog, and I will show you a fallen countenance and coward appearance. The parent may neglect to chastise the child, and the truth will be known by the child in the years of his manhood being sent a slave to State prison.

Show me a man's wife who is badly treated by the husband, and I will show you a woman who always in society has a dejected and downcast look: but show me one who treats his wife like a companion, and I will show you a woman who holds up her head with a bold courage. The truth will be known

III. *The truth when known exposes sin.*—An ignorant man may be regarded a great man when his superior is not known, but as soon as his superior steps forth he must give place; for the lesser must succumb to the greater. So with falsehood; it may have a great sway until the truth steps into sight and throws back the veil that covered it; then and there it is *exposed*. Satan was king of earth until Jesus came, and then he had to leave the throne and

even give up the armor in which he trusted. "I am the way and the truth," says Christ, and his advent into the world exposed the whole empire of sin. His coming was predicted by the prophets but doubted by many, and when he came falsehood met him and rebuffed him, and he, King of kings, rebuked and exposed it when he told the world that the devil was the father of lies, which was the truth, to be witnessed by all generations. At this hazard, I fancy, so to speak, the devil was made very sick; for the truth is generally a dose of medicine to the wicked. There are some people in our churches whom every body believe to be consistent Christians until the pastor tells the truth on them and they are proven to be the worst kind of devils. People can very well hide themselves behind falsehood and wrap up in the mantle of transgression and make the world believe that they are almost angels, but just let the truth be revealed and they are found black-hearted sinners. Judas was thought a good disciple until Christ told the truth on him, and then it was known that he had been a devil from the beginning.

If the truth had never been known,
He would have never been shown.

The devil was thought to be an angel of light in heaven until the truth was known; and then "there was a war in heaven: Michael and his

angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels. And prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven." *

“ How art thou fallen from heaven,
O Lucifer, son of the morning !
How art thou cut down to the ground
That didst weaken the nation ! ”

Truth is glorious when known.

Falsehood may cause pain and sorrow; it often makes us bathe our couch in tears, but when the truth is revealed it brings along with it the balm of joy, which heals the troubled soul.

For nine years the murder of — Barron, of Dexter, Me., lay in obscurity; the falsehood of suicide prevailed and his widow suffered the scorn of thousands; but the other day a young man who thought he was dying (— Stain) told that his father, accompanied by others, committed the crime. This truth being revealed changed the whole current of public sentiment. The vail of false accusation that had been spread over the sepulchre of Barron, under the shadow of which his widow had suffered the scorn of many, was lifted to the winds, and the thousands who had heaped upon her rebukes and scorn now profess to be her friends. This poor woman had shed many tears in bitter weeping while she prayed to God to make known the truth of the awful

* Rev. xii : 7, 8.

tragedy that took her husband from her side. For nine long years she wept and prayed,—and at last in the providence of Almighty God the glorious truth was suddenly revealed, and condemned the ocean tide of false theories, and she arose from her couch of sorrow, wiping dry her tears, with thanksgiving and praise. “Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.” So it is with every one who knows the truth of a risen Saviour. This makes us, dear brethren, think about the day of judgment, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed at the tribunal of unbiased Justice.

“That awful day will surely come.”

Then it will be truly known who is on the Lord's side, when every knee will be bowing and every tongue will be confessing that Jesus is the Christ, and infidels and atheists will wake up to know the truth, and the long-lived lies of their false theories will fall to the ground, and Jesus Christ, Lord of lords, with his church, will march out in triumph with the flag of truth hoisted in the midst of blood-washed armies to crown him Lord of all.

SERMON XLIV.

GOD DWELLING WITH ISRAEL.

If thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgments, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, And dwell among the children of Israel and will not forsake my people Israel.—1 Kings vi: 12, 13.

THE children of Israel were an emancipated people from Egyptian bondage who were God's elect. Their rise to prominence in Canaan, their land of freedom, had been a gradual ascent, until now they stand in the arena of their greatest prosperity and brightest glory, having at their head Solomon, a young king whose wisdom men of ages have not equalled. He was truly David's successor, God's appointed and Israel's blessing. I feel that I can properly compare your conditions with theirs.

You are an emancipated people from civil bondage, enjoying freedom's glory and the happiness of liberty, having at your head a young man, your blessed selection and God-appointed shepherd, who

* This sermon was preached by your humble servant at the dedication of the First Baptist Church, Liberty, Va., Oct. 31, 1886.

has already made his indelible mark in the hearts of men and on the sands of time as a representative of his race, and is destined to carve his name in the top rock of his country's honor. Solomon in the fourth year of his reign began laying the foundation of the temple, the house which he had been commanded to build for God by his father and predecessor, David; and while thus engaged God appeared to him in the words of the text, giving him and all Israel a special charge concerning his intentions to be with them, that they might not presume upon the duration of the house nor his blessings unless they continue in obedience.

Fine houses are very apt to make people proud and disobedient; and God readily apprehended the possibility of Israel wandering from his law; therefore preparatory to the building's completion he in a declaration charges them not to leave his commandments but ever abide in them. God had far rather have obedience than our fine houses.

He showed Israel that he had rather dwell in the tabernacle built by Moses and have obedience than to dwell in the fine temple built by Solomon with a disobedient people.

In like manner I desire to-day, beloved brethren, to show you the will of our heavenly Father and his mercies.

In my perusal over much of the Bible to find a

text suitable to the occasion, the Holy Spirit has directed my attention to the aforesaid verses, and on them have I halted with no other intention than to give you the unsearchable riches of Christ in plain and unerring terms.

This is the day and hour to which you and your pastor have looked forward with no little solicitude; the work you undertook in faith and prayer months ago, and have prosecuted with so much diligence, is brought by God helping you and doing for you to completion, of which I know, while weary from fatigue and toil, you are proud. I feel proud to know that perfect harmony has characterized the work from its inception to its consummation, and am truly grateful with you in presenting it as an offering with willing hands and loving hearts to God, who has chosen Zion for his habitation, and pray that in acceptance of your tribute he may say to us in our hearts: "This is my rest, here will I dwell."

God is present, and while he speaks to us through his inspired word let us listen to what he says:

I. *He commands us to walk in his statutes and keep his commandments.*—Man is a free agent and God is independent, yet ever merciful, but cannot go beyond his laws. He is a friend to dying sinners, and is not disposed to forsake them so long as they abide in the truth.

Man denounces God before God forsakes him. Adam left God before God forsook him. "Walk in my statutes," that is, his written laws, and keep them, is the King's command, and "ye shall find rest for your souls."

God is very just with men. He does not call upon us to keep implied laws, but written laws. The attention of Israel is called to the ten commandments given Moses for their guide from Mt. Sinai.

II. *He commands us to execute his judgments.*—The Church of Christ is no law-making body; it is only to execute the laws of Christ. Therefore we are commanded to execute the judgments of God and not man in the government of the Church. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the Church." *

Therefore he is the rightful owner of the Church, as he has said: "Upon this rock I will build my Church," and the law-giver thereof. If a church makes laws contrary to Christ's teachings it invades beyond spiritual prerogative, and thus ceases to be a gospel church. I entreat you, dear brethren, above all things, *execute the judgments of God*. Do this and ye shall be blest.

If we walk in God's statutes, execute his judgments, and keep his commandments, he says of himself,

* Eph. i: 22.

III. *I will dwell among the children of Israel and will not forsake my people Israel.*—What a sublime thought that God will dwell among us. “But will God in very deed dwell among men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!”* one would fain ask; but God has promised it, and before his word shall fail, heaven and earth shall pass away.

About six hundred years before the advent of Christ, God showed Nebuchadnezzar in a dream that in the midst of earthly kingdoms he would set up a kingdom that would have pre-eminence over all, and in the fullness of time, the Saviour, the world’s Redeemer, came and inaugurated this kingdom and set it up in the hearts of men, to dwell therein forever. He promises never to forsake us.

“I will be with you always,” “And because I live ye shall live also.”

What greater evidences of his love do we want? The thing for us to know is that we do abide in his statutes, keep his commandments, and execute his judgments; if this is done we may sing to the joy and happiness of our weary souls :

“Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on his gentle breast.”

* 2 Chron. vi : 18.

How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word !
What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge hath fled ? ”

SERMON XLV.

COMING OUT FROM AMONG THE WICKED.

Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.—2 COR. VI : 17.

EVER since Adam transgressed the law of God there has been a warfare going on in the spiritual world, known as the conflict between sin and righteousness. Satan is the chief of the angels which fell from their estate of righteousness and * he became the king of wickedness. He set up his kingdom in direct opposition to God, and has used every means in his power to rob God.

Then we would notice that he (Satan) is strictly God's enemy. He is the prince of darkness, and works wickedness to delude the human family.

His fall was wrought on a crime of high transgression which we would call treason, that cannot be repented of. That part of the human family which he can and does delude is with him and works with him in opposition to God, truth, and righteousness. There can be no fellowship between God

* Is. xiv : 12.

and Satan, neither can there be any between their peoples. Therefore God calls his people out from among Satan's, and says, "Touch not the unclean thing." And it is only when we come out from among them that he will receive us.

This coming out from among the wicked implies,
I. *A condemnation of all that's evil.*

The word condemn means to speak against or pronounce to be wrong. The apostle tells us that, "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:"* Christ came speaking against sin to condemnation that he might destroy the power of it.

Now to condemn sin one must hate it, for it is against the nature of man to condemn what he loves. David says: "I hate every false way;" and again he says, "I hate vain thoughts;" wherefore he said that he loved the way of the Lord. We must condemn sin everywhere, in all conditions and places. "If thy right eye offend thee pluck it out and cast it from thee."

This coming out from among the wicked embodies or implies,

II. *Turning away from all sin.*

A daughter once asked her father the privilege of attending a party with immoral characters. The father offered his child a piece of coal. She, refus-

* Rom. viii : 3.

ing to take it, said: "O! father it will smut me and soil my dress." "Yes, my child," replied the father, "and so will impure society soil your character." God's people cannot afford to associate with the wicked, therefore they are called out from among them and they must turn away from every worldly idol.

We are commanded "to let our lights shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven."

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."* Therefore we must "put on the whole armor of God." And the whole armor of God is turning from sin and wickedness and taking up the cross and following Jesus Christ, our Lord, through both evil and good reports. There are people who don't believe that the religion of Jesus Christ was designed to make earthly pleasures less when Jesus says, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." †

There are many amusements, such as dancing, that they believe to be no sin. They say dancing is no harm, for it gives exercise to the body and exercise, says physiology, is good. Now let us see about this. If public dancing were the only way that ex-

* 2 Cor. v : 17.

† Matt. xvi : 24.

ercise could be had there might be some excuse: but there are hundreds of other ways that the body can get exercise. They claim that the Bible does not condemn it, and what the Bible does not condemn the preacher has no right to condemn. Not so: the Bible does condemn dancing, for this very text condemns it, for it says, "Come out from among them." And not only so, but God condemned it in judgment the other day in the earthquake that took place in Europe.

At Diana Marina was going on a dance in a house beside the house of God, and in the shock the church edifice was thrown upon them and all were killed. If God were to deal justly with all the balls of the world this would be their end. "Come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord." There is another evil from which we must come, namely, *drunkenness*.

If there is one strong enemy to the Church of Christ it is intoxicating drink. It blasts more homes and destroys more men than war, and causes more confusion than any agent that Satan has. Solomon says, "Wine is a mocker and strong drink is raging," and "give strong drink to him that is ready to perish." Strong drink destroys manhood, weakens the system and damns the soul. There is another evil we should turn from, namely, *gambling*.

Gambling is a household thief that steals from

the wife and children their bread, their pleasure and their happiness. A gambling den is a machine that molds and fashions men for none other place than hell. "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." This coming out from among them implies,

III. *Standing firm for truth.*—Standing up for truth, law and justice is a duty from which the world often shrinks. Some men come out from among the wicked but are soon driven back by the storms of temptations and tribulations. We must stand by the truth in the day of the severest contest, fearless of death.

"Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." Then if the truth has the power to make one free we should stand by it, uphold and support it. Some men believe in law until it reaches them and then they want to shun it; they put upon others what they are not willing to serve themselves. This is one of the nation's main stumbling stones, which causes so very much trouble among us. Law-makers should be law-abiders, and then they can carry out the spirit of equity. Christ enacted no law for his Church but what he himself served; he met its demands and suffered its penalty even unto death. Now some undoubtedly would make the inquiry--when shall we come out from

the wicked? I answer: Now. Now is the accepted time, now is the day of the Lord.

Some men say they are going to stop gambling when they get rich, and serve the Lord. But, Sirs, riches that are gotten by transgression shall perish in your hands. Others say they are going to stop drinking when they get old. But, Sirs, when you get old it will be harder to turn. "The day ye hear my voice harden not your heart."

"Haste, O sinner; now be wise;
Stay not for the morrow's sun;
Wisdom if you still despise,
Harder is it to be won."

The followers of Christ must abandon the ranks of the wicked. "You cannot serve God and mammon." Who is on the Lord's side? Men and brethren, whom are you serving? If you desire to serve the Lord you must let the devil be. None but the pure in heart shall see God. God help you to serve him in spirit and in truth.

"Oh, for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

SERMON XLVI.

THE DIVINE COMMISSION.

As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.—MATT. x : 7.

THIS commission is preparatory to the final commission which our Lord gave on his ascension; though its meaning holds good now and will be forever. None of our Lord's teachings will ever go out of play; they must ever remain the true standard of right by which the world may be led to everlasting rest.

The facts relating to his birth are of as much importance as those of his death. His history is a chain of unbroken links, out of which to drop one would disadvantage the world. The Bible is the divine standard, teaching the will of God and character of Jesus Christ, and whatever is therein contained is final and unchangeable. Therefore let us regard the text as a charge given to the followers of Jesus Christ, that should by all means be obeyed through all ages.

I. *To whom the charge is given.*—Christ Jesus came into this world to gather his Church unto him-

self and establish it upon a firm basis. Thus, says he, "Upon this rock I will build my Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He came to this end; but before he entered upon his mission he selected from among the sons of earth men to be witnesses of his works, and assist him in making his mission known, whom he clothed with power to do miracles. To these men he gave the charge: *As ye go, preach*. In this we notice that the charge is to the righteous and not the wicked.

Upon those who profess to know Christ in forgiveness of sin, and to be his followers, is enjoined the responsibility of carrying the truth of his kingdom to all the world, that sinners may learn of him and be saved. It is pre-requisite that we know Christ ourselves if we are going to tell others about him, not by reputation only but by experimental knowledge; therefore our Lord does not send out strangers to make known the counsel of his will, but those who have had their own sins forgiven and know him well. When he crossed the sea and came into the country of the Gadarenes he met a man coming out from among the tombs with a legion of devils in him; he first drove the devils out of the man, gave him his right mind, and then sent him to tell his friends what the Lord had done for him. No man can preach Jesus who does not know

him. He has said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," and it is impossible to love if we are not acquainted. Therefore our dear Redeemer addresses the command to believers, those who have been called out from among the world and have denied themselves and have taken up the cross and are following him.

To the church the charge is given,
To spread the gospel rays,
That sinners perishing in despair,
May seek the Savior's grace.

The charge is not addressed even to angels, who fly aloft in the presence of God, but fallen man, who has been redeemed from under the curse of the broken law.

Angels undoubtedly would be glad to take part in the glorious work of spreading the gospel truth among the sons of earth, but it is rejected them. To man does God look and hold responsible for the extension of his kingdom in earth. I call upon the Church in the name of Jesus Christ to remember that our duty is of great importance. We are the watchmen upon the wall to alarm the wicked respecting their danger, and point them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world. I ask, are we making Christ's great commission

known to the wicked? If we are, sinners will be saved and God glorified; but if we are not, their blood will be required at our hands.

“Go preach my gospel, saith the Lord;
Bid the whole earth my grace receive;
He shall be saved that trusts my word,
And he condemned who'll not believe.”

II. *What the charge contains and what we are to preach.*—It is full of meaning and indeed contains a wonderful and glorious treasure, for it contains the whole plan of our redemption. In contents it begins with the formation of the heaven and earth, and relates the fall of man from God's favor, the disgrace and shame that covered him, a complete history of the prophetic age, and best of all it shows that “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Jesus stands in the fourth thousandth year of the world's history, and commissions his followers to go and make it known to the world that the kingdom is at hand, and men who were made sinners by the voluntary transgression of Adam can be restored to the favor of their Maker by believing in the Son of righteousness. In making this known to the world it is necessary that we explain the philosophy of the kingdom, show what kind of a kingdom, the necessity of a kingdom, the king of the kingdom, the sub-

jects of the kingdom, the origin of the kingdom, and what power and grace there are invested in the kingdom. When Jesus instructed Cleopas and another man, after his resurrection, as they walked through the country one day, he began at Moses and the prophets and explained unto them all the scripture: and we must be able to do the same. Paul wrote Timothy to study to show himself a man. We must "Preach, saying," says Christ, "the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He has come, the light of the world, to shine away darkness and to suffer, the just for the unjust. The prophets' predictions are fulfilled; from the loins of David the Saviour has sprung, Bethlehem has rocked in her arms the infant of redemption, Egypt has been blessed with the footprints of the Son of God, and the waves of Jordan have been honored with the baptismal travel of a kind and loving Saviour. He has come to break down the partition wall that divided Jew and Gentile, and welcome into everlasting rest men of all nations.

The kingdom of heaven is at hand; the King of righteousness has set up his throne in the world of sin, bound the prince of darkness and cast him out, and now sways his sceptre in supremacy over the universe, to whom every knee must bow and every tongue confess. This deliverance to captive souls is a free-will offering of the Prince of peace,

“Freely ye have received and freely give.” “Come without money and without price.” “He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.” The peasant is invited as well as the king, the beggar as well as the prince. This is not all the charge contains which we are to preach, but remember, “He that believeth not shall be damned.” Christ is king of the universe. “All power is given unto me in heaven and earth,” says he. And all who believe not in him shall be turned into hell. The kingdom is not far off, it is at hand, in the reach of every man, and he who denies it must suffer death, yes, eternal death. Therefore, sinners, the day you hear his voice harden not your hearts.

III. *How we are to preach.*—He who preaches the gospel holds the highest position to which mortal is heir; he is the messenger of truth, upon his tongue rolls the sweet tidings of salvation; the very place on which he stands is holy ground; he holds in his grasp the keys of the kingdom of heaven, he carries in his hand the Bible, the code of the kingdom which he represents, that contains the King’s will. Therefore let us notice in the *first* place that being in such a responsible position it is highly necessary that he should be a reliable man for both truthfulness and honesty. He is charged by the King not to take away nor add to, but deliver the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. He represents a plain way,

and the way must not be crooked by his false apprehension.

Next, let us notice that we are to preach in meekness and through tribulation; we are to sow in tears if we would reap in joy “In the world ye shall have tribulation.” Jesus was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and he has said to us, if any man would be his disciple let him first deny himself, take up his cross, and follow him.

“ Must Jesus bear the cross alone
And all the world go free?
No there’s a cross for every one.
And there’s a cross for me.”

SERMON XLVII.

CHARITY

And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.—1 COR. XIII : 13.

I HEARD a man the other day praising a speaker for having said, “Some people say that charity begins at home, but not so; charity begins abroad; for when a man feeds his children he only does his duty; but when he gives his neighbor a piece of bread that is charity; therefore,” says he, “charity begins abroad.” From this statement I grew ambitious to preach from this text

I claim with no little boldness that charity does begin at home with every one who knows it and has it. It is an inward working of the soul and heart that works out a manifested love for God and man. Charity does not consist in benevolence, but benevolence consists in charity

There is a grace that predominates all other graces the apostle calls charity, another name for God, which is the root and ground of others—hope and faith. Charity is the real essence of Christianity,

in the absence of which there is nothing that God will own. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."—Then let us notice,

I. *Charity is love, and love is the basis—*

(a). *Of regeneration.*—"He that loveth is born of God." "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, strength, mind, and heart," is the first command.

(b). *Of justification.*—We are justified by faith, and by faith we have peace with God; but faith is seated in the bosom of charity, for God is love, and he is the justifier, and only those who love can be justified.

(c). *Of sanctification.*—There is a human love and there is a divine love. Human love becomes divine when it is sanctified by grace divine. Our Lord prayed for his disciples (Church) that they might be sanctified through truth, *i.e.*, that their love and ours might be overcome by heavenly power and be-

come perfect and make us perfect, even as our Heavenly Father which is in heaven is perfect.

II. *Charity (love) is the true basis of ethics.*— Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, is the second command, and upon this civil government is founded.

But for divine law there could be no civil law; for civil government is as much the will of God as divine government. The great truth that fell from the lips of Daniel, when he stood before Belshazzar, that, “The most high God rules in the kingdom of men, and that he appoints over it whomsoever he will,” has been clearly demonstrated in all ages. That, “no man can live unto himself alone,” is as true to-day as it was when God saw it was not good for man to be alone. The human family is an unbroken unit, and it is as much man’s duty to love his fellow-man and live for the good of others as it is to love himself and live for the good of himself.

Hence civil government should labor to no other end saving the good of humanity. *Salus populi suprema est lex*, the fundamental principle of law is benevolence. This idea lives universally in the minds of the American citizens, and is fast making its way in all kingdoms and dominions. The enactments of all laws of government and the execution of the same should be characterized by a spirit of charity. “Law should be the buckler of the peas-

ant as well as the defense of the noble, the inheritance of the poor as well as that of the rich, the staff of honesty and shield of innocence and not a sword of craft and oppression:" and in this spirit is founded the constitution of the United States. Therefore, officers should know that they are *ordained* of God, and citizens should know that they are commanded by God to be subject to the *higher powers*.

Moreover, the Church of God should be bound up in *charity*, and church officers should be men of charity.

The works of charity, which are true, pure, and undefiled religion before God,* are, "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction." Charity suffereth long, is kind; envieth not, vaunteth not—(is not boasting and proud) and is not puffed up. Here we see charity working at home. I was at a poor woman's house last Thursday, whom I found in a suffering state. She told me that she had several grown sons. It is to them a disgrace to allow their mother so to suffer. There are suffering widows to-day who have been faithful in doing much good, and there are living next door to them professing Christians who will not so much as give them a piece of bread. There are many fatherless and motherless children to-day in our city among our church mem-

* Jas. i. 27.

bers, who have neither bread nor clothing, and men and women who call themselves Christians walk by them and turn up their noses at them as though they were mortgaged against them.

Charity keepeth herself unspotted from the world.—Here we find charity again working at home. “How wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye”*

Charity loveth and maketh peace.—“Blessed are the peacemakers.” Charity “rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.”

My dear brethren and sisters, these are the fruits of charity, and where they are not found there is no charity, and where there is no charity there is no love, and where there is no love there is none of the religion of Jesus Christ.

III. *Charity (love) never faileth, but is eternal and must and will stand when all things else shall fail.*

Prophecies shall fail, but not charity. Tongues shall cease, but not charity. Knowledge shall van-

* Matt. vii : 4, 5.

ish away, but not charity. Hope shall fail, for it is only an anchor, when the soul takes its heavenly flight, but not charity. Faith shall fall to the ground, for it is only the substance of things hoped for, but not charity. Charity is as eternal as God himself. Charity shall land our souls in that eternal bliss above where we shall know, not in part, but as we are known.

SERMON XLVIII.

MEDITATION IN SORROW

In the day of adversity consider.—ECCL. VII : 14.

IN this life just over against pleasure we find sorrow; just over against the cup of joy sets the cup of grief, filled with bitters unto death, which is common to all mankind. But thanks be to God he is a strong deliverer to all that call upon him.

I. In the day of adversity consider the *cause of distress*.—If we would be logical in our conclusions we must reason from cause to effect; anything else than this is merely intuition, which is not always satisfactory.

1. “The effect of sin is death.” “The soul that sinneth shall die.” Suffering in every relation of life is caused by sin.

2. Disregard for law brings suffering: The violation of moral law brings moral weakness, of physical law brings physical weakness, and in like manner whenever divine law is disregarded spiritual weakness is the consequence.

3. Imprudence brings suffering: The house-mis-

tress who is extravagant will bring her household to poverty. The ungodly father destroys the life of his family. The thousands who suffered last winter from cold and hunger should consider, and for the time to come spend less money on railroad excursions to benefit railroad stock-holders, and lay by more in store to benefit themselves and families.

II. In the day of adversity consider the *wisdom and goodness of God*.

“God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform.”

1. Afflictions bring us nearer to God: “For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.” *

2. He chastises in love: “Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him,” † and “no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” ‡ He brings us low that he may raise us high.

III. In the day of adversity consider *God's power to save his heart's delight*:

1. To this intent the Saviour prays his Father: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth,” § and moreover he says: “Of them which thou gavest me, have I lost none.” || “I give unto

* Heb. xii : 6.

† Ps. ciii : 13.

‡ Ps. lxxxiv : 11.

§ John xvii : 17.

|| John xviii : 9.

them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” *

2. He will give us wisdom: “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.” †

3. He will give us grace: “My grace is sufficient for thee,” ‡ and thanks be to God that we have access to this wherein we stand.

* John x : 28.

† James i : 5.

‡ 2 Cor. xii : 9. ┘

SERMON XLIX.

THE UNSPEAKABLE GIFT.

Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.—2 COR. IX : 15.

THE Apostle Paul arouses the members of the Corinthian church to their charitable duties. He would have them understand that it was their duty to contribute to God as he had prospered them.* In the last verse he seems to give a reason why we should give the Lord thanks by exclaiming, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”

Well might he have so exclaimed, for he utters none other than the sentiments of every true child of God; for when we survey the incommensurable field of God’s boundless gifts to usward we find ourselves debtors to him for our life and our all. The apostle calls our attention here to only one of the many gifts that God has bestowed upon us, and this one is, Jesus Christ, enough to engage our attention, time, and wisdom all life; for it is not only unspeakable but inestimable as well. Our very creation is a blessing, the length, breadth, depth and height of which cannot be measured by mortal

* Verses 6-9.

skill. Our existence is another of no less greatness, for in God we live, move, and have our being. The great apostle was not insensible to these facts, but having in all probability reflected upon man's degraded condition, brought upon him by Adam's fall, and seeing in God such a love for him that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, he amazingly spoke, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

I. *This gift embodies every thing that relates to our salvation.*—What shall we say about this wonderful character, Jesus Christ? Language is inadequate to express our conception of him. Were we to attempt to discuss his divinity we would contribute to him every attribute that God himself owns, for it is not robbery to make him equal with his Father. Then if we were to consider his personality we would place him pre-eminently beyond all beings that ever walked or dwelt upon this earth.

Such a person was required to redeem man. No creature could do it; it required one equal with God in essence and power, and such a grand personage could be found only in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Then this gift bestowed upon man is of no small value. God, when pity touched his heart and he would fain bless man, did not, like many a rich man when he would bless the poor, walk through

his kingdom and give the minor of his store, but gives the best of his kingdom, his only begotten Son.

Now, my friends, why did God do so much for us? Was it because we are grand, noble and righteous? No! No! for we are the most sinful, miserable, and wicked of all his creation. He did it because he loved us.

II. *This gift is bestowed upon us.*—The great gift was bestowed upon man by God not because he merited it, not because he asked for it, not because he sought it, but because, as I have afore said, God loved him.

Then let us notice, 1st, It was voluntary on the part of God to give Jesus, his only begotten Son, to suffer and die for sinful man. In this he is unlike man. Man does not bestow gifts upon his enemies unsought. 2nd, It was voluntary on the part of Jesus to consent to come and suffer and die for sinful man. Men regret to suffer for themselves, while Christ suffered for others.

III. *Salvation is given to all.*—“Whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.” Not the great and noble alone, but all.

In a vision on the house-top God taught Peter to know that he was no respecter of persons. Jesus stood up and cried, saying: “if any man thirst let him come unto me and drink.” Here the poor can

but rejoice; for the freedom of salvation is joy to us unspeakable.

“ If religion was a thing that money could buy,
The rich would live and the poor would die;”
But thanks be unto God, in him we find,
Salvation is free to all mankind.

“ Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

SERMON L.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

Behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.—EXODUS III : 2.

“ God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform.”

His wisdom lies deeper than the depths beneath, and is higher than the heights above.

His ways are past finding out and none but he can interpret the mystery of his plans. “ From everlasting to everlasting thou art God.” Jacob getting the birthright is a mystery; the Hebrews being brought into Egyptian bondage by the sale of Joseph is a mystery; Moses being saved by the skill of his mother in the face of the Egyptian law, and received and reared by Pharaoh’s daughter is a mystery, and his preservation from death with bloody hands by fleeing to the land of Midian while Pharaoh sought his blood to shed and life to take is a mystery, but the greatest of all mysteries is that God himself did come down in a flame of fire and talk with his servant Moses out of a bush. The mystery

here is too great to be fathomed by human skill; it awaits us to be interpreted when "we shall know even as we are known," but we do know that it represents the development of some great event to be consummated in the eternal purposes of God the Father.

I. *The bush is symbolic of the Church of Christ*, which John the revelator viewed in the appearance of a woman clothed with the sun, beneath whose feet was the moon and upon whose head was a crown of twelve stars.

Moses saw this bush while watching Jethro's flock on Mt. Horeb; whence it came he did not know. The flames he saw were wrapped and tied around it, and yet it was not consumed. This put Moses in notion to study the mystery and see whether he could account for, or learn, anything about it.

He turned aside, that is, he left his flock alone, to see what such a thing was; and while he stood trembling in utter amazement God speaks and lets him know that it was he wearing a mantle of flames who had come down to deliver his children from bondage in answer to their groans and earnest prayers uttered under the task-master's lash.

It is a mystery which symbolizes the mystery of our redemption. "Great is the mystery of godliness: God manifest in the flesh, justified in the

Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory," says Paul.

The mystery is not only great, but too great to be fathomed by human skill. It is a mystery of which angels know but little; it is plain to none but the Trinity. All that Moses could say about the bush was, that he saw it and turned aside to see what it was, and God spoke to him out of it; and all that we can tell about our redemption is, that we know that wherein we were blind we now see.

Adam transgressed God's law, and by his transgression we were made sinners, and Jesus Christ the Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, became incarnate, took our place under the law, suffered, bled, and died that such as we might live.

II. *The flames of the bush represent the trials of the Church of Christ*, which he came to establish. The deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage symbolizes the deliverance of the human family from the curse of the broken law, sin and death.

God heard their groans under the oppressive yoke of bondage, which attracted his sympathy; he likewise heard the groans of the human family under the law travailing in sin and shame, and "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that

whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

The trials of Moses in leading the children from bondage did not exceed, nor equal, the trials of our dear Redeemer in working out our redemption. He was rejected and hated of men; he was led as a lamb to the slaughter and died the death of the cross, pulling down the powers of darkness with all power in his hands.

Now he says to his Church, which is founded upon himself, the rock, "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

The Apostles started out in the cause of God's care on the bloody waves of tribulations, contending for the faith, carrying the gospel truth, which rolled like a tide of peace dashing beneath its destructive waves every obstacle of the devil's skill planting the Church of Christ. They all, after fighting like faithful soldiers, died the martyr's death, except John, thus planting their blood on the field of battle which is springing up in fruit to-day to the Master's harvest. From thence to this the Church has come through many tribulations.

Moses, with the children of Israel, were followed by Pharaoh and all his hosts to the Red Sea; so the Church of Christ is followed by the devil and all his hosts, to the river of death.

The trials and sufferings of the children of Israel in the wilderness attract the sympathy of every human being. They suffered for water, afar off from human aid, no water could be had; they gathered around Moses in distressive alarms crying for water. Mothers pressed their babes to their bosoms and cried, "Give us drink."

The very ground on which they stood, I fancy, seemed to say I can do you no good. Alas! alas! when death was about to invade their ranks, Moses went to God to know what to do. God told him to speak to the rock; in obedience thereto he spoke and waters came.

They also hungered there and God fed them with manna from heaven. They were bitten by serpents, and God commanded Moses to lift up a brass serpent upon a pole, on which they looked and were healed.

The Church of Christ is travelling in this world through a waste howling wilderness of woe; if any thirst, Jesus is the Rock, and says: "Come unto me and drink;" if any hunger, he says, "I am the bread of life;" if any be bitten by the serpents of hell, he says, "Come unto me, and be saved, all ye that labor, and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

"Put your trust in me and I will make you as Mount Zion, which shall not be removed," says he to the weary traveller, while he wags with the cross in the valley of tribulations.

III. *The bush not being consumed symbolizes the triumph of the Church of Christ.*

Dear brethren, we come now to the most glorious thought of our career, that is, we shall not be conquered.

“Thou dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed Church of God
Be saved to sin no more.”

The Church of Christ is surely well founded. “Upon this rock I will build my church,” says Christ, “and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Before speaking of its triumph let us look to its origin, which we will find in the membership of one person. For this record where shall we look? Shall we look to the dramatic writings of Shakespeare? No. Shall we look to Blackstone’s commentations on the laws of England? No. Then where shall we look? To the Bible, the book of all books, the world’s history.

Here we walk back to creation when God said let us make man in our own image. This man was Adam, made the first member of the Church; see now it has grown to multitudes, billions and quadrillions. Like a grain of mustard seed, the most small of all grains, deposited in the earth, has become a tree of large branches for the roosting of many fowls, on-

ward from Adam to Abel, from Abel to Abraham, from Abraham onward to the advent of Christ the great Shepherd, in whom it was fully established to the gathering in even of the Gentiles, and to-day the whole world is about to be the members thereof.

The dark and the long-benighted continent of Africa is now being awakened to its light. The stone which Daniel saw, cut out of the mountain without hands, has become the corner-stone.

1st. *Its members are cross bearers.*

They may not be found among the great and the noble, but they will be found among the meek and lowly; they may not be found in the law-making halls of the land, but they will be found in the law-abiding citizens; they may not be found in the fine dwelling, but they will be found in the log-cabin; they may not be found among the learned, the scientists, and the great philosophers, but they will be found among the illiterate; they may not be found around the fire-side of the rich, who count their dollars by thousands, but they will be found around the fire-side of the poor widow, who prays to God for bread.

2nd. *To be a member*, sinners, you must be born again. You must have peace with God through Jesus Christ. You must be born of the water and the Spirit before you can see the kingdom of God.

“He that would be my disciple let him first deny

himself, take up the cross and follow me," says Christ the great Shepherd. Infidels say that the Christian religion is a fiction and will soon fail; but not so, it is the world's only hope, it is a reality to which every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess.

3rd. *God must and will have a people*; his name will ever be praised. If the aged stop, the little ones in the cradles will praise him; if all mankind stop, the birds of the heaven will chant their songs heavenward in praise; if all the earth stop there are the angels ever beholding his face to praise him on harps of gold; were they to throw down their harps to go with fallen angels, the gate-post of heaven would cry out, "Glory to God in the highest."

Then let the wicked say no more that the Church of Christ will cease, for he is able to lead it on until the last foe is vanquished and death is swallowed up in victory; and then the church militant will shake hands with the church triumphant in heaven above, where parting shall be no more, where congregation never breaks up and Sabbath has no end.

The bush was burning, yet not consumed; so is hell raging against the Church, but will never overcome.

SERMON LI.

THE SURE FOUNDATION.

Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner-stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.—1 PETER II : 6.

THE apostle Peter calls our attention to a prophetic utterance made by Isaiah,* about B. C. 760, which was fulfilled in Christ. Christ is very often spoken of in the scriptures as a stone, which is a representation of his firmness.

Stone is *hard* and firm, much more so than iron, and endures for *ages*. When men wish to build upon a sure foundation they always seek a stone. that their building may not fall when the winds come and the rains descend. Hence the Church of Christ is founded upon the rock Christ himself, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.

This stone is said to be laid in Zion—this means in Jerusalem, where the temple of God was built. David chose Jerusalem as the metropolis of his kingdom. His selection was undoubtedly of divine origin, for it was upon Mt. Moriah that Abraham at

* Is. xxviii : 16.

God's command offered Isaac, and upon this same Mount our Saviour died. The word Zion originally means a hill, and this hill undoubtedly was the Mt. Moriah; but now it means the Church of God. Therefore the stone Christ is laid a foundation to the Church; for when he said to Peter "Upon this rock I will build my Church," he meant that he would build it upon himself. Now we desire to notice,

I. *The nature of the sure foundation, Christ.*

1st. *Elect stone:* There are stones in the quarry that will not do for foundations, especially the chief corner-stone. Hence always in getting out a foundation stone there is quite a selection made. Christ is the chosen of God.* This selection was made on the ground that none other was found worthy.†

2nd. *Precious stone:* Things of great value and cost are precious, and by the wise are generally esteemed as such. Christ is esteemed as a precious stone because he is the best of heaven, the only begotten Son of God. Angels honor him as such and man should and must praise him as such for he is worthy. Man has had but one Saviour and can never have but one. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism;" and by him all who will be saved, are saved and all who will not be saved by him must be forever lost.

* Matt. xii : 18.

† Rev. v.

3rd. *Tried stone*: Isaiah says a tried stone, and truly he is a tried stone. *Our Lord* was tried first by temptation—when he had fasted forty days Satan came and tempted him. He was tried secondly by tribulations. In this he showed capabilities to stand more than mortal man. He submitted himself to his enemies without condemnation of sin or just trial. When he was reviled he reviled not again. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearers is dumb, he opened not his mouth. And while suffering under the horrors of pain and death which were being inflicted by the cruel hands of his enemies, he prayed, “Father forgive them.”

Having noticed the nature of the foundation-stone Christ, we desire to notice,

II. *The nature of the structure, the Church.*

1st. *They are a regenerate people*: The words that fell from the lips of our Lord to Nicodemus, “Ye must be born again,” have characterized the members of his Church in all ages. This mighty change is effected in the heart and results in purifying the whole body “The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened.”

People who claim to be followers of Christ and are still clinging to their sins in lust, and when hailed about it say their soul was converted and not

their body, know nothing of Christ; they are hypocrites. This great change in the heart affects the whole body and the convert is made a new creature, for Paul says: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."* Then here is justified the saying, "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." Therefore we are called upon by God through his word, to present our bodies unto him a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable, which is only a reasonable service.†

2nd. *They are an humble people.* None but the humble have a part in the membership of the Church of Christ. "Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."‡

Men that cannot be ruled by the word of God are none of Christ's; for God has said of his people that, "a little child shall lead them." Whenever the gospel cannot control men Christ is to them a rock of offense.

3rd. *Christ's people are one:* "The whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in

* 2 Cor. v : 11. 1 Peter ii : 9.

† Rom. xii : 1.

‡ Matt. xviii : 3.

love.”* Here is set forth the unity of the Church of Christ in unmistakable terms. Nowadays it is a common thing to find people in our churches who don't and won't speak to one another, and yet they say they love the Lord while they hate their brother. The Bible says, they are liars.

4th. *They are a peculiar people*, therefore not beloved by the world. “Woe be unto you when all men speak well of you.” “If the world love you, you are none of mine,” says Christ. Some people are always complaining about their trials. They forget that our Lord has said “In the world you shall have tribulation.” On the above statements we would say that, these are they who believe in Christ and have founded their hopes upon him, the eternal rock of ages, the sure foundation.

III. *Whosoever builds upon him shall not be confounded.*—Here we launch out upon the deep and anchor in the eternal promises of God, and defy the powers of hell to move us.

“Safe in the arms of Jesus,
Safe on his gentle breast.”

If men want to know whether this is a sure foundation let them build on it and try it. Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and all the prophets built on it, and they found it sound, firm and sure. The

* Eph. iv : 16.

apostles and all who have followed in faith built on it and none were deceived, and we hoped and trusted, and our faith has not been in vain. The intercessory prayer prayed by our Lord for his Church, "Father keep them," etc., was heard and is heard now and answered in heaven. Every time death comes and takes one away it is the answering of that prayer. "Part of the host have crossed the flood, and part are crossing now." None of his gets lost in the swelling floods of Jordan. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and staff they comfort me."

SERMON LII.

SPIRITUAL REVOLUTION.

Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.—**MATT. X : 34.**

THE Jews had suffered so much oppression of captivity that a desire for peace had interwoven in their thoughts to the bottom of their hearts, and a coming Saviour being predicted by the prophets as the “Prince of Peace,” who would set up his kingdom, they expected his reign would be to them abundance of peace, and Ephraim would no longer vex Judah nor Judah Ephraim, but that there would be a glorious government to them and their children.

But Christ came aiming at the unexpected object and disappoints their expectation. He came not to make war with the Romans alone but the Jews as well, and set up a spiritual kingdom where they expected a temporal one; hence his mission was an upheaval of warfare and subjugation of sin, which would at last bring universal peace.

I. *Righteousness and sin have no fellowship.*—The world had passed through a period of four thousand

years gross darkness, and for these many years sin and crime had been brooding over the souls of men, supported by all the attributes of evil that Satan possessed; which had made man more wicked, by reason of practice, than he was the day he fell. The devil had made the world his kingdom, its inhabitants his subjects, and had instructed them to dishonor God and have nothing to do with righteousness, but make sin their chief glory. Now arises the Son of righteousness with healing in his wings, casting his radiant rays upon a dark sin-benighted world, which men rebuffed on every hand, because there was no fellowship to be had between the two. The "Prince of Peace" calls upon the "Prince of Darkness" to give ground, and says to one and all, "He that is not with me is against me." "His fan is in his hand, he will thoroughly purge his floor before he gathers his wheat in his garner, and the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

He can have no fellowship with Satan; for, "as high as the heavens are above the earth so high are his ways above Satan's ways," and every one who follows after him must be like-minded. No man can serve two masters, and he who would serve God will be at variance with Satan in everything.

You remember once there came a young man to Christ seeking to be saved; he was willing to lay aside every weight except worldly riches, and for

this one neglect he was rejected eternal life. A man must give up all for Christ or he cannot inherit everlasting life.

II. *Peace comes through conflict.*—About twenty-four years ago, when thirteen Southern States withdrew from the Union and declared themselves an independent sovereignty with Jeff. Davis at their head as king, there was a cry, heard from the hill of headquarters to the last valley of the South: “Let us have peace.” Peace came, but how did it come? it came walking behind the sword; the South was made a battle-ground and the North a prison-house; sons were taken from mothers’ sides and husbands from wives’ sides to lay their lives upon their country’s altar, and, while wives and mothers hid their faces behind the veil of sorrow, the high-lands were made rivers of blood by the floods that came gushing from the veins of their beloved ones; our great men fell and died holding their bleeding hearts in their hands. But when conflict had subdued the South, peace to the joy of the whole country came.

“Think not that I am come to send peace, but a sword.” Christ’s mission into the world was to subdue sin, bind Satan, and reclaim the wicked heart that had revolted from God, which necessitated great conflict. “When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and over-

come him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.”* Satan had entered into the heart of man and taken possession thereof; sin and crime had reached the very zenith of degradation. Man’s heart was his palace and the world his dominion, and the Son of God could not enter his palace unless he first bound him. Therefore the sword must be used before sinful man could be redeemed. Satan is too loyal to his trust to give up without being made to do so by reason of being overpowered. To invite him out is an insult; he must be driven out. When he saw Christ coming he was alarmed, and cried, ‘Thou Son of the most high God, what has thou to do with me?’

Our blessed Saviour had much to do with him; he had used deception upon man and led him astray from his Creator, and the Master had come to claim that which was his own by reason of creation, and depose him therefrom, and take away from him the very armor in which he trusted, cast him out and restore peace to the earth, which he, Satan, had taken away, that the lamb and lion, in the day of his triumph, might lie down together, and the hand of a little child be the world’s guide. This must be done through great conflict and suffering. When he was twelve years old his judgment was tested by the council of wise men; when thirty, Satan met

* Luke xi : 21, 22.

him in the wilderness in person, and tested his righteousness, and soon after he walked in the temple and found thieves defiling God's house with money changing; he threw the table over and with a double cord drove them out, and told the Jews it was written that, "his Father's house should be a house of prayer." Such wonderful working appeared to them like the world turning upside down; hence the wicked came out in united ranks against him, but he moved on in the might of his power in spite of all the powers of hell combined. Man had fallen from God's favor, and he could not be restored without the shedding of blood. Therefore,

"He sunk beneath our heavy woes
To raise us to his throne;
There's ne'er a gift his hand bestows,
But cost his heart a groan."

Satan had the keys of death and hell, which he must relinquish before man's redemption could be made secure.

Therefore he suffers, bleeds and dies that he might taste of death for all mankind. In Gethsemane he cries, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death;" at Pilate's bar he stands friendless, despised and forsaken, and on the cross he cries: "I yield, I yield! It is finished." "Father receive my spirit." Then the door of hell was unbolted, the chambers of

death entered, and the keys of death and hell wrung from Satan's hand.

“ My God, he cries, all nature shakes,
 And earth's strong pillars bend,
 The gate of death in sunder breaks,
 The solid marbles rend.”

Joy came on the third morning, when he rose and said: “All power is given unto me in heaven and earth,” and commissioned his disciples to go and preach the gospel to every creature.

III. *Sin must be subdued before grace can triumph.*—Sin having entered the human family it is natural for man to feel proud, high-minded and selfish, and the Holy Spirit cannot dwell there until sin is overcome and eradicated. Satan must be made to abandon before God will take possession. This brings us to notice what I would call war in the mind over the soul. Paul seems to have noticed the very same thing when he said: “I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.”*

“The carnal mind is enmity against God: because it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Peace abides in the grace of God, but there must be a smiting in the soul before this peace is given. Paul says: “I was alive without the law

* Rom. vii : 23.

once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died;" thus we plainly see that there must be a sin-killing before there can be spiritual living. When the Holy Spirit enters man's heart the law takes fast hold on his soul, and the heart is turned inside out; a radical change is at once brought about and self-complacency is no longer esteemed. Satan is hated and God loved, and out of the valley of humility, on the ladder of faith, the soul walks into the kingdom of heaven to live and never die. This is a Spiritual revolution which turns the man around, sets his face toward heaven and his back toward hell, the city of "Destruction." He is a new creature in Christ; old things have passed away and behold all things are new, and he is heard saying, as he starts on his heavenly march,

“Through floods and flames, if Jesus lead
I'll follow where he goes,
Hinder me not, shall be my cry,
Though earth and hell oppose.”

SERMON LIII.

THE WISE TOWER BUILDER, COUNTING THE COST.

Which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.—LUKE XIV: 28-30.

THE conditions of discipleship as laid down in this chapter by Jesus Christ are forcible, striking and binding. He makes a declaration in plain and simple words setting forth the pre-requisites to discipleship, and then gives a double parabolic declaration illustrative of the wise judgment and common wisdom necessary to a proper beginning. *Which of you, says he, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost?*

This is a temporal illustration, bringing out a great spiritual truth; it is not based upon fiction nor a mere trifle, but rather a stern reality and wonderful

* A series of four sermons on the double parable and the conditions of discipleship given by Christ in Luke the fourteenth chapter from the twenty-eighth to the thirty-third verses.

magnitude. When Christ said to his hearers, "Which of you intending to build a tower," etc., they readily understood him as calling their attention to the dimensions of something that was more than a poor man could well do and was no small task for a rich man; for the building of a tower is something that was rarely undertaken in those days by one man, but rather by many. The towers built in the East were generally high buildings or castles, sometimes used for refuge, and sometimes for viewing the surrounding country, and were generally built by the government. Hackett says that, "These towers are said sometimes to be square in form as well as round, and as high as forty or fifty feet." Towers were built of very costly material, I would readily judge, such as brick and stone, for we read in Genesis, eleventh chapter, where the people said one to another: "Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven." This was an undertaking of the people, not an individual, which may only tend to heighten our thoughts in regard to tower building.

Now, my hearers, he makes this temporal illustration to teach us a great spiritual truth, which is this: If men should take precaution in erecting for them-

selves here an edifice which is only temporal to withstand the storms of the few years of their life upon earth, it is much more necessary that they should exercise foresight and prudence in building unto themselves a character or spiritual house that must withstand the day of judgment. "But, ah! count up the cost of salvation?" inquires one; "salvation is free, I've heard all my life;" but be still, my friend; be not excited, I pray you; mistake not the Saviour's intention. He does not mean to set a cost upon salvation by this parabolic statement; for it cannot be bought by man at any price, and yet it is to be had at a great expense. He makes the building of the tower an individual matter, which better brings out the truth. He says, "which of you," that is, which one of you, "intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it?" The obtaining of salvation is strictly an individual matter, to which total self-denial is altogether pre-requisite. Salvation is had free when the terms of Christ as laid down in his word are complied with; the receiving of which exonerates one and places him in a state of grandeur and felicity. In this situation he becomes responsible for supreme love to God, sacrifice of the world and total submission to the cross. This is the cost that should be counted up and well counted too before starting; for he says, "If any

man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Here stop, my friend, and make your count before you start. The reason why there are to be found so many nominal Christians in the world is because they start after Christ before they contemplate the cost. They run in the Church upon a false belief; they know nothing of the requirements of high heaven and contemplate no responsibility. If any man would build for himself a tower of defense that will withstand God's eternal wrath, he must do it at no trifling cost: father, mother, wife, children, brethren, sisters, yea and his own self, as far as opposed to Christ's kingdom, must be forsaken and denied. Eternal allegiance to God is the lowest cost at which salvation can be had. Christ does not want your silver nor your gold as a compensation for his grace, but rather a devotion of our life, of our soul, and of our all that cannot be put asunder by the powers of hell. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." There are persons who allow their faith in God to waver on the conviction of their re-

lation; but, men and brethren, these things ought not and must not so to be if we would be true followers of Jesus Christ. If father oppose your service to God you must tell him that with a consciousness of your individual responsibility to your Heavenly Father you must demur his ways; if mother objects to your coming to Christ you must tell her, I love you, mother dear, but I love the Lord more than all; if your wife, my brother, disdains your following Christ you must tell her to hinder you not, for to follow Jesus you are bound; if children, though they loving be, be a hindrance unto you, you must leave that idol be, and follow Jesus to be free; and more than this, self, whom you love more than all, must be crucified:

All of these stand near and dear
 But in following Christ,
 Them we must not fear.

Now, I ask, what is the cost of eternal life? It is one's self and all that he has. Stop and see: It cost "Christian" nothing to enter the "Wicket-gate," but it cost him much to reach it. It cost him a sacrifice of relatives, friends, property and the taking of his burden (his cross) and leaving the city of "Destruction" in haste. It cost him a battle with "Pliable" and "Obstinate" of no small degree, and beside this it cost him many groans, much sorrow and struggle in the slough of "Despond" before he

reached the "Wicket-gate." It was too much of a cost for "Pliable." He started with bold courage, but when he had fallen into the slough of "Despond" he said to "Christian," "May I get out again with my life, you shall possess the brave country alone for me." So with many to-day; they run well for a season, but in the day of fiery trials they fall away by the way-side, perish, wither and die. Moreover we would notice that the counting of the cost is very advantageous to the undertaker. Christ alleges here as a reason why the counting of the cost should be made, "Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him."

Here we would notice that the basis of the consideration of this parabolic statement is the possibility of finishing after the beginning shall have been made; for a failure to complete the beginning throws the builder in a position to be criticised by the public. It is far better never to begin a thing than it is to begin and not be able to finish. The tower of Babel in its unfinished condition stands out to-day to the gaze of the world in monumental mockery. That people previous to their undertaking to build their tower did not consider the possibilities and impossibilities of building a tower from earth to heaven but went headlong about their undertaking, hit or miss, to build a tower to heaven anyhow. We find no-

where in the Scriptures where they counted the cost of their undertaking, but we do read where God hated and overthrew them in their mad career. Men and brethren, their temporal failure teaches us a great spiritual lesson; they attempted to go to heaven a new way; a way aside from God's pre-ordained way; that is why they failed. Men to-day are trying to build up new ways to heaven; false prophets are crying, "Here is Christ and there is Christ," saying unto the people, "Come and go with us." Oh that men were wise, that they would consider their latter end. Daniel bespoke their destiny when he said, "they shall awake to shame and everlasting contempt." "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."* Therefore every man who attempts to go to heaven any other way save through and by Jesus Christ, in strict compliance with his teachings, is sure to fail totally. He does not only suffer the loss of his endeavor, but the scorn of every one who sees him.—"All that behold it begin to mock him, saying, this man began to build, and was not able to finish."

From the wording of the text we would judge that passers by on beholding his failure make known their condemnation not to the builder, the third person, but rather to the second, which shows that it has become a topic for conversation among them.

* 1 Cor. iii : 11.

They say one to another, pointing out the individual, "this man began to build, and was not able to finish." Backsliders don't like to be pointed out as such by the Christian; they want to occupy high seats in the synagogue and stand out among men unnoticed as false believers, and when they are pointed out as Judas's kinsfolk they often become angry and make very unbecoming assertions. Nowadays if a member is expelled from the church the preacher must not announce it publicly: if he does somebody is grossly insulted. When a backslider dies, on delivering the funeral address over his lifeless remains the preacher must say nothing about his shortcomings; if he does he is greatly stigmatized and rebuked by the relation.

Now, dear hearers, before I conclude this thought I desire to speak a few words on *excellency of character*. Character is not a garment to be put on all at once, but is of continual growth day by day, step by step, like the island of the sea, which begins with a few pebbles, and by constant growth it becomes a body of itself, covered over with God's green carpet. Just so with man in his moral and intellectual growth; he comes into the world an unimproved creature, endowed with five senses and a mind capable of indefinite expansion, and by a continual growth step by step, day by day, may acquire great knowledge. As the island stands forth in beauty, so may

he in the grandeur and majesty of his manhood. Thousands begin to build unto themselves lofty characters, but fall away in disgrace by the way-side. "A good name is better than precious ointment, rather to be chosen than riches," and who among you would not desire it and seek it? Young men start out going to be great preachers or lawyers, or are going to make themselves efficient in some other profession; fathers spend their money on them freely; but the next you hear of them they are notorious gamblers and drunkards. Young women in like manner make their start to fame and renown; parents rejoice and pour out their money, time and pains upon them; but presently they stoop to degradation and shame, and their parents and friends go around mourning; the thunders of their destruction roll across the world and they go down never to rise again. The world knows it, for it is put upon record, and generations mock them saying: "These people began to build, but were not able to finish." Sad! sad! Whence comes all this failure and degradation in society? It is because men in beginning life do not count the cost. Parents do not count the cost of rearing their children, and children do not count the cost of making themselves. Parents, what will it cost to make your son a gentleman or your daughter a lady? It will cost your prayers, pains, toil, care, money and much private instruction. Sons

and daughters, what will it cost you to be noble and great? Fidelity to God, loyalty to parents, industry and frugality “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.”* But there is more than this: “For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” In judgment the mockery of their failure will still go on. How many will appear in that day who did not finish their spiritual tower, and consequently have no refuge from the storm of God’s wrath? God help you all to first count the cost and build for yourselves a character, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that will abide the day of God’s wrath.

* Matt. vii: 33.

SERMON LIV.

THE TWO KINGS.

Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?—LUKE XIV : 31.

THIS utterance stands in apposition to the statement gone before; it does not only bear a striking relation to it but throws a flood of light upon it as well. It is the battle-ground upon which many theological battles have been fought. Bible scholars have pronounced it to be very complex; their disputes over it have given birth to many theories with which I shall not attempt to interfere, but shall only address myself to the subject as directed by the Holy Spirit. Every sinner, my dear hearers, is a warrior fighting against God; in his position he is king unto himself; for inasmuch as he is a free agent he is governed by his own will—he is the *king going to make war*. He is represented in this parable as going to war with ten thousand. The language does not imply that he is sole proprietor of ten thousand, but rather that he has ten thousand upon which he bases

his calculations, considering the possibility of capturing a king with twice that number. The sinner is not proprietor of the hosts of darkness, but only stands in common friendship with them, whose assistance and fidelity he can obtain at any time to aid him in fighting against Jehovah, whether or not they can conquer. It seems that the hosts of hell are but man's servants; for the devil himself is subject to the will of man as far as he has to do with his soul; for it is in the power of man to say unto the hosts of hell and even to Satan, the prince of darkness, "Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther." The devil has no power over man but that he allows him by his own free will and voluntary choice. I have heard men say that the devil made them do this and that, but it was not so, for the devil is but a creature and therefore has no controlling influence over other creatures beyond their consent. Men are led and not driven captive into the bondage of sin. It is when a man gives himself to Satan that he is led captive at his will.

Satan would have destroyed Job without consulting God had it been in his power so to do; he told God that he could make Job curse him if he would only allow him access to him, which shows that he was powerless in his own might to affect him. God allowed him the privilege of afflicting Job with sore troubles, but allowed him no power to force him

beyond his will in regard to his spiritual devotion. To have done so would have been a gross injustice to Job, for it would have divested him of his free agency, and made him a slave to Satan's will, and this God will not do. Therefore we can see, at once, that every man carries the destiny of his soul in his own hands, insomuch he becomes king, or master, unto and over himself in regard to his spiritual choice; this the sinner should know. Now the thing that every sinner should do is to consult whether he is enabled with all the assistance that the hosts of darkness can render him, which are reckoned only at ten thousand, to fight against Jehovah, who comes against him with twenty thousand, and has in reserve innumerable armies beside with which he can at any time at his will increase his force. This consultation is an individual matter and must be had with some one who is well informed with regard to the situation of things betwixt the two armies at variance. Satan cannot advise you, sinner, for he is no friend to grace to help you on to God; if you counsel with him he is sure to lead you in the dark. He is prejudiced toward God and will not state to you the true condition of things.

But consult the wise and prudent soldier of the cross; ask the preacher, the watchman upon the wall, are you able to fight against Jehovah, and you will be truly informed as to his supreme power and

wisdom and your weakness and inability to fight against him. God is the *king that cometh against* you, sinner, and he that warreth against him shall come to nothing. God is a man of war and he fighteth them that fight against him; for he sayeth: "I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury and in great wrath." He is king over all by reason of *creation*. He holdeth the winds at his command, and the clouds he can make his chariots of war.

The armies of heaven know none other but him to obey, for they are his subjects. Heaven is his throne and the earth his footstool, and when he moveth in wrath there is none to say, Jehovah why doest thou ?

He is king over all by reason of *supreme wisdom*. The iniquities of man are open before his eyes, he understandeth him to perfection, even to the hidden secrets of his heart; he watches man's transgression with a penetrating eye, and when his hand taketh hold in vengeance he knows how to avenge them that hate him.

He is king over all by reason of *supreme power*. He erected the world by his word of power, heaven is but a mansion built by his own hand, and all creation moves and succumbs at his command. He controls the floods in the channel of the mighty

deep, the winds go abroad at his command, and at his word even mountains skip like lambs.

“Ah ! how shall guilty man
Contend with such a God ?
None, none can meet him, and escape,
But thro’ the Saviour’s blood.”

Poor sinner, are you enabled to fight against such a king? Have you consulted, calculated your weakness, measured your ignorance, and wisely considered his power and greatness? These things seriously consider. Moreover God has never lost a battle. In the antediluvian age the people foolishly fought against him—they disdained his mercies and heeded not the preaching of Noah; but when he rose in might against them, they were carried away in his wrath. The people of Sodom and Gomorrah went to war against him; they heaped iniquity upon iniquity, transgression upon transgression, until at last his hand took hold in vengeance, his power revealed judgment, and they were consumed in his wrath.

Pharaoh fought against him with his armies of war, but he destroyed him with all of his hosts in the Red Sea and moved on in victorious triumph.

Nebuchadnezzar in mad fury lifted up his hands in wickedness against him, and he was driven on his all fours to the forest to gnaw grass seven years like an ox. So with every man, nation, and people who go to war against him.—“The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name.”

SERMON LV

CHRIST, THE WORLD'S AMBASSAGE.

Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassador, and desireth conditions of peace.—LUKE XIV: 32.

AN ambassador is one who intercedes with one party or country for another.

Christ is the world's ambassador, who intercedes with God for the sinner—"He ever liveth to make intercession for them."* In civil government ambassadors receive large salaries as a compensation for service rendered; but in divine government we find things quite different. Christ intercedes for us without money and without price; but he requires of every one for whom he intercedes, submission and obedience. Peace with God is the thing for every sinner to desire, for he is not prepared to meet him in war. The state of variance between God and the sinner is serious, and there is but one who can intercede between them, namely, the man Christ Jesus.

The United States government is not lacking for

* Heb. vii : 25.

ambassadors to send abroad to foreign countries, for there are more than one hundred applications to every appointment given ; but not so in divine government, for without Jesus the world is lost for a representative in the eternal courts above. Christ is the only one who can plead with God to any effect.

Furthermore, an ambassador is one who stands under no little responsibility. In civil government the most expert lawyers of the times are generally sought for such positions ; for it is necessary that they should be well informed in regard even to the technicalities of law, to meet the requirements of their office. They go from their own country to intercede, representing no small constituencies. Therefore men of wisdom and sound judgment are sought.

So in divine government, with the exception of one thing, namely, there is a plurality in civil government, while in divine government there is a singularity ; for Jesus Christ, alone, intercedes for the whole world.

The responsibility of the office of an ambassador in divine government is so very great that it requires one greater in wisdom and power than humanity can produce. John the revelator tells us that the earth and beneath the earth were searched, and the heaven was searched for an intercessor for man, and there was none found able or worthy to open the

book of the seven seals and read therein; for which cause he wept much; but he heard a voice which came from one of the elders of heaven, saying: "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and loose the seven seals thereof. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne." *

Oh! how glorious and amazing,
That the Lord of glory prevailed
When man was sinking in despair,
To intercede when all else failed.

None but Jesus can successfully plead at the eternal bar of unbiassed Justice. Now, poor sinner, will you have him to intercede for you? do you desire conditions of peace with God, the Emperor of the universe? Jesus stands daily making intercession for you, and if you will only believe you are saved; for he says, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him, and he with me." †

* Rev. v.

† Rev. iii : 20.

He makes no charges; but only asks that you comply with his conditions of discipleship—"If any man," says he, "will be my disciple, let him first deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." This calls for total submission to the cross. Would you be his disciple? If so, just humble yourself at the feet of our dear Redeemer, saying,

"Here Lord, I give myself to thee,
Tis all that I can do."

SERMON LVI.

TOTAL SUBMISSION TO THE CROSS.

So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.—LUKE XIV : 33.

HERE is laid down the true condition of discipleship. It embodies all that is pre-requisite to the complete obtainment of salvation. It implies:

I. *Non-conformity to the world.*—Ye cannot serve two masters, or God and mammon. The world is a master, and he who serves it finds himself in bondage. The man who owns his thousands in bank stock or railroad bonds, and makes himself a slave thereto, is forever tormented about his interest, and throws everybody around him in torment because of his fretting about carnal matters. We need not wonder at Christ saying, “it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven,” for he who is devoted to this world serves a master of many requirements. Therefore when a man starts out to follow Jesus the very first thing necessary is to make up his mind to forsake all of this life for the life to come. “Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good,

and acceptable, and perfect will of God.” He who is conformed to the things of this world cannot please God.

“The carnal mind is enmity against God: because it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Hence he who would come after Christ must be spiritually minded; which is done by restraining himself from the things of the world and placing his affection on things above. Everything like sin must be denounced, and the cross taken up with boldness, and Jesus followed whithersoever he leadeth, through evil report as well as good. Moreover, this resolution must be steadfast; the world must be given up forever. You must be determined for God to live and for God to die; “for he that puts his hands to the plow and looks back, is not fit for the kingdom.” When this is done the soul is lifted to the favor of God to see, witness and feel a glorious change, and the man no longer lives after the flesh but after the Spirit, and sings daily:

“Nearer my God to thee.”

II. *Crucifixion of self*.—Self is a very dear thing; man loves himself above all things. Why? because he doesn’t know himself. Self is a good thing when not known, but when known a very bad thing.

If man only knew himself this world would not have so much crime to deal with. If men would take more time studying themselves and less in

studying their neighbors the world would be better off by far. There is only one way by which we can properly learn ourselves and that is by loving and serving God. It is possible for us to know much about the sciences of the world and know nothing about "Mr. Self." Whenever man learns himself he falls out with himself. Self is the soul's great enemy, and before the soul can enter heaven it must be crucified. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin."

"The dearest idol I have known,
What'er that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne,
And worship only thee."

When self is denied, rejected and put down, it is left to die and the soul enters a new life in Christ Jesus. It does not die all at once, but gradually. "We are killed all the day long." God help us to modify the deeds of the body and live daily a life divinely new unto God.

III. *Devotion to Christ.*—"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."* This is the first command, and with this let us start. Non-conformity to the world, and crucifixion of self throws one in reach of the Saviour, where he can by faith touch the hem

* Matt. xxii : 37.

of his garment and be healed. Before one can fully consent to deny and crucify self the foundation of all affection, love, must be laid deep in the soul: "Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." Wherever there is love faith abides. It is as much impossible to love without faith as it is for the sun to shine without giving light. Deep love, strong faith; shallow love, weak faith; and no love, no faith.

Devotion to Christ is the first, and in fact the only proof of the spiritual birth, because no man knows him but to love him. Furthermore, we cannot love Christ without loving his people. "Love thy neighbor as thyself," is the second command: and John says: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen."* Now, in conclusion, I would say that these severe conditions of discipleship are not without reward to those who comply with them; for if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him, sitting on thrones helping to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."†

* I Jno. iv : 20.

† Matt. xix : 29.

